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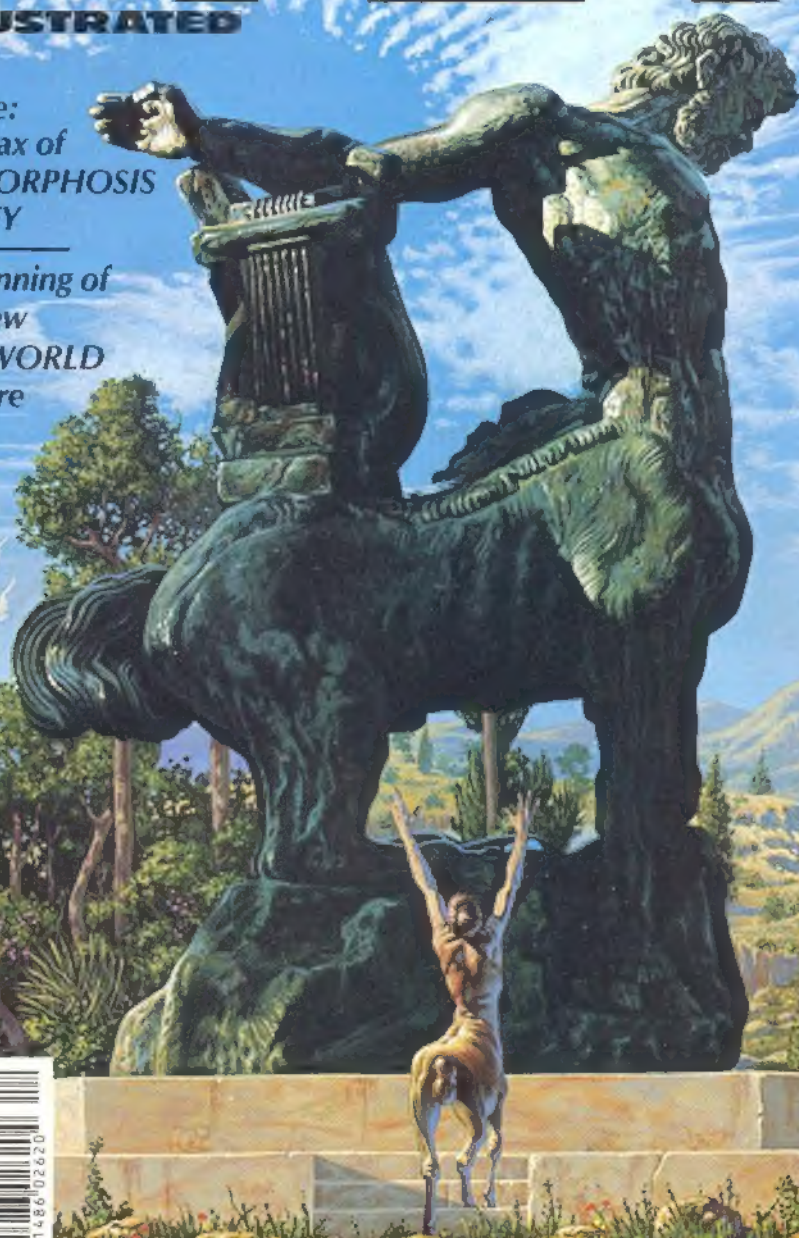
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ILLUSTRATED

TM

this issue:
the climax of
METAMORPHOSIS
ODYSSEY

the beginning of
an all-new
WEIRDWORLD
adventure



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epic

ILLUSTRATED

DECEMBER 1981 VOL. 1, NO. 9

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DOOMSDAY!



THERE'S
TOO MANY
OF THESE
BASTARDS,
COMIN'
TOO FAST!

THIS IS JUST
NO GOOD!

I'VE NEVER SEEN
ZYG MERCENARIES
FIGHT SO
FIERCELY!

THAT'S BECAUSE
THESE ZYGOTEAN
THRALLS AREN'T
JUST FOLLOWING
ORDERS TONIGHT.

THEY KNOW WHAT
WE'RE ABOUT TO DO,
AND THEY'RE FIGHTING
FOR THEIR LIVES!

THEY'RE PRESSING US TOO HARD!



IT'S ALL I CAN DO TO WARD OFF THEIR RADIUM LASER FIRE.



THEY'RE NOT LETTING UP LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO SWITCH TO USING MY SWORD OFFENSIVELY, AND ...

... ANY TIME NOW THEY'LL THINK OF GETTING SOME JET PACKS DOWN HERE. THEY'LL TAKE TO THE AIR AND THEN PICK US OFF LIKE THE SITTING DUCKS WE ARE.



WELL, BY THEN WE'LL ...

ARRGG!



SORRY, VANTH. IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO HELP YOU MUCH LONGER.

I'VE BEEN HIT!



DAMNATION!

THEY'RE CONCENTRATING ALL THEIR FIRE ON YOUR FLANK AND BREAKING THROUGH!

YOU'VE GOT TO COVER ME BETTER, OR WE'RE FINISHED!



I'LL TRY!

DON'T TRY!

DO IT!

HOW MUCH MUCH LONGER DO WE HAVE TO KEEP THIS UP?!

WHY HAVEN'T THOSE THREE BLOWN THAT DAMN HORN OF YOURS?!

THEY CAN'T YET!

THE INFINITY HORN CANNOT BE USED UNTIL THE EXACT MOMENT THAT CERTAIN FORCES IN THE COSMOS ARE IN A PROPER ALIGNMENT.

"HOW LONG BEFORE THAT HAPPENS?"

"SOON!
VERY SOON!"

NOW!
THE MOMENT IS UPON US.

LET'S DO IT, THEN,
WHILE I'VE STILL GOT
SOME NERVE LEFT.

I WONDER
IF THIS IS
GOING TO
HURT.

PROBABLY...
CHANGE
USUALLY DOES.

THANKS FOR THE
ENCOURAGEMENT,
ZA.

WELL,
HERE GOES
NOTHING!

NO, JULIET,
HERE GOES
EVERYTHING.

ALL THREE SMILE. THEY'VE COME
TOO FAR TO DO ANYTHING ELSE. THE
FEAR IS AT LAST GONE. ONLY BELIEF REMAINS.

BELIEF IN THE POTENTIAL
OF TOMORROW.

BELIEF IN THE POWER
AND BEAUTY OF LIFE.

BELIEF IN THE CLEANSING
POWER OF DEATH.

THE HORN SOUNDS!

THE SOUND CRACKS
THE THIN LAYER OF
REALITY. AND
FIFTEENTH-LEVEL
POWER POURS INTO
OUR FIRST-LEVEL
UNIVERSE.

THE PLAYERS
DISAPPEAR INTO
AN EXPLOSIVE
VORTEX OF
LIGHT, SOUND
AND ENERGY.

THE **FORCE**
REACHES OUT INTO
A PLANE OF
EXISTENCE TOO
FRAGILE AND
EPHEMERAL TO
CONTAIN IT.

FOR A BRIEF, JOLTING
MOMENT, REALITY RESISTS
THE IRRESISTIBLE. THE
SECONDS STRETCH
PERCEPTIONS TO THEIR
FULLEST, FOR THIS IS
THE END.



VANTH!
TO MY SIDE!

WE'RE
TOO...



THE MOMENT
PASSES. THE
DEATH OF
A GALAXY
BEGINS.





THERE ARE FIFTEEN KNOWN POWER LEVELS OR DIMENSIONS OF MYSTICAL EXISTENCE.

THE FIRST LEVEL IS EXISTENCE AS WE KNOW IT. THIS INCLUDES THE STARS, THE PLANETS, AND ALL PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE, INCLUDING HUMANS.



SO CLOSE ARE WE TO THE SECOND LEVEL OF POWER THAT WE HAVE NO TROUBLE TAPPING INTO ATOMIC, ELECTRICAL, MAGNETIC, PHOTON, AND OTHER FORCES WHICH EXIST THERE.

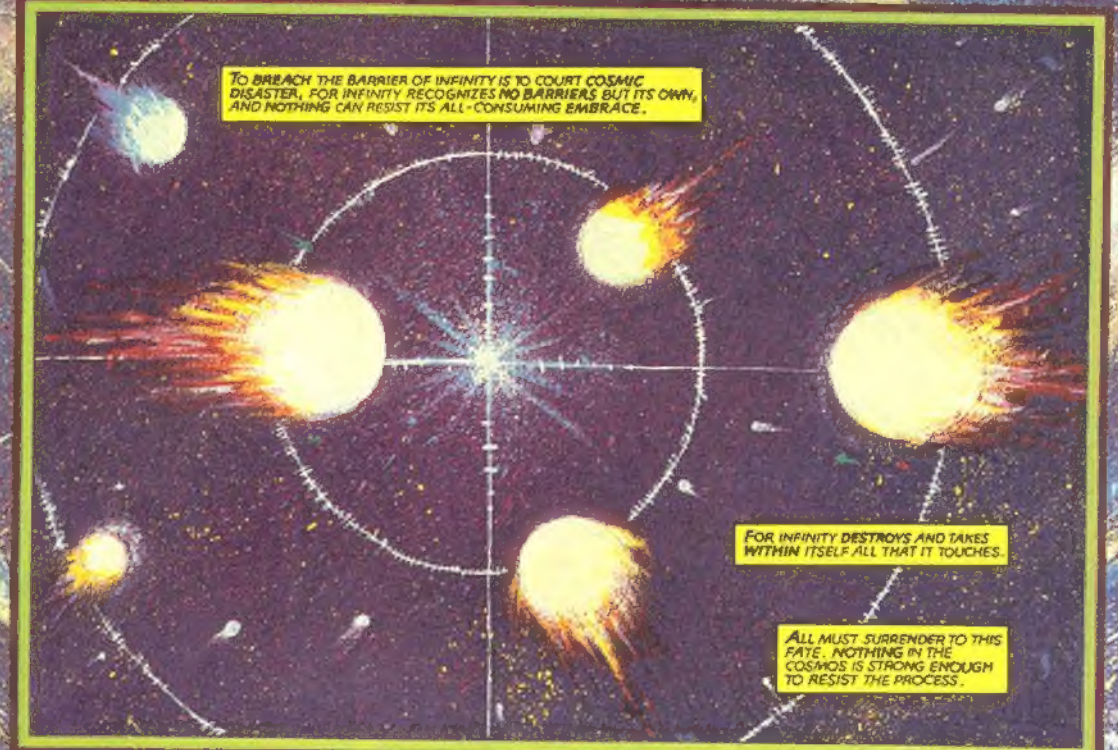
BUT DIMENSIONS THREE THROUGH NINE ARE MYSTICAL PLANES, AND ONLY HIGHLY SKILLED FIRST-LEVELERS, SUCH AS WIZARDS AND PRIESTS, CAN MAKE USE OF THE FORCES THAT EXIST THERE.



THE TENTH, ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH LEVELS ARE THE NATURAL HABITAT OF CREATURES OF GREAT POWER, SUCH AS DEMONS, SPIRITS, ELEMENTALS, ANGELS AND DREAD VEIL SORCERERS. FEW FIRST-LEVELERS EVER VENTURE HERE.

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH PLANES ARE THE PROVINCES OF THE GODS.

THE FIFTEENTH LEVEL IS THE SOLE DOMAIN OF A BEING OF OMNIPOTENT FORCE AND MANY NAMES. HIS PLANE OF POWER IS WITHOUT END. HIS IS THE REALITY OF INFINITY.



TO BREACH THE BARRIER OF INFINITY IS TO COURT COSMIC
DISASTER. FOR INFINITY RECOGNIZES NO BARRIERS BUT ITS OWN,
AND NOTHING CAN RESIST ITS ALL-CONSUMING EMBRACE.

FOR INFINITY DESTROYS AND TAKES
WITHIN ITSELF ALL THAT IT TOUCHES.

ALL MUST SURRENDER TO THIS
FATE. NOTHING IN THE
COSMOS IS STRONG ENOUGH
TO RESIST THE PROCESS.

NOT PLANETS.

NOT STARS.

NOT SOLAR SYSTEMS.

NOT EVEN GALAXIES.

SO DIES THE MILKY WAY.

FORTUNATELY, THE SYSTEM OF LEVELS
IS A MAJOR LAW OF THE COSMOS
AND MUST RIGHT ITSELF AS QUICKLY
AS ITS NATURE WILL ALLOW. THUS,
INFINITY'S POWER EVENTUALLY
REALIGNS ITSELF.



BUT ALL THAT WAS KNOWN
AS THE MILKY WAY GALAXY
HAS BEEN TOUCHED BY THE
INFINITE AND IS NO MORE.
GONE ARE THE 100 BILLION
STARS AND THEIR SYSTEMS.
GONE ARE THE SOULS WITH-
OUT NUMBER WHO ONCE
PEOPLED THAT GALAXY. THEY
HAVE BECOME PART OF THE
FOREVER.

ONLY FIVE
SOULS HAVE
ESCAPED
THIS FATE.



THREE ARE BEINGS OF A
NEW BREED, BEINGS OF
PURE ENERGY, THEY LINGER
FOR A TIMELESS MOMENT AS
IF SHOCKED AND CONFUSED
BY THEIR OWN EXISTENCE
AND THE AWESOME SIGHT
OF THEIR AFTERBIRTH.



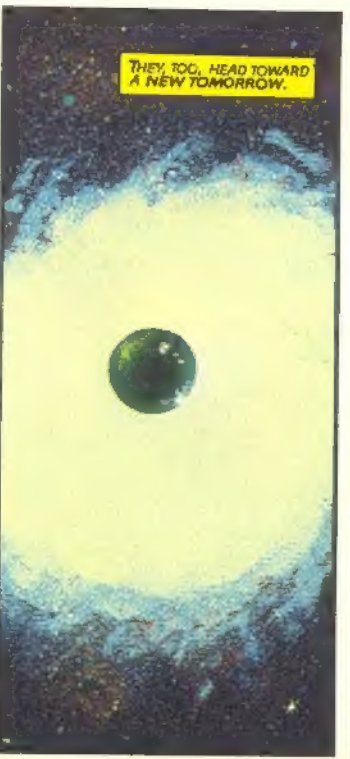
BUT THE UNCERTAINTY
FADES, AND BELIEF
RETURNS. THE
PAST IS DEAD,
AND THE PROMISE
OF TOMORROW
MUST BE
FULFILLED.

A NEW
BEGINNING
IS BORN.

THE OTHER TWO SOULS?



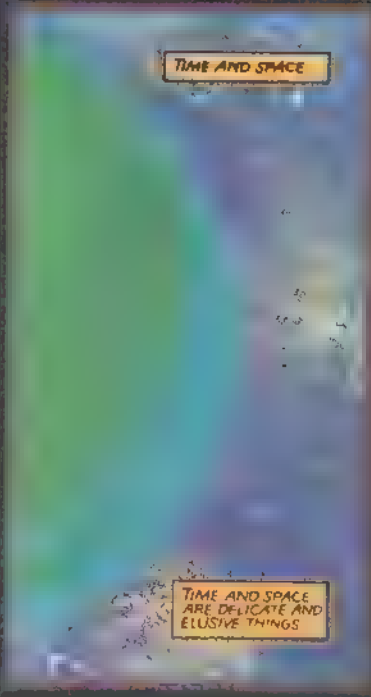
THEY ARE OF AN
OLDER BREED.



THEY, TOO, HEAD TOWARD
A NEW TOMORROW.



BUT THEIRS WILL BE
LONGER IN COMING.

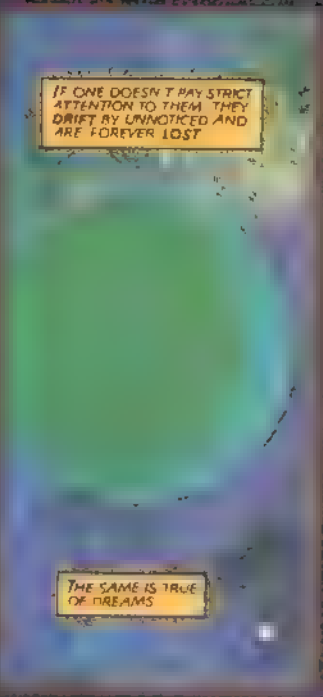


TIME AND SPACE

IF ONE DOESN'T PAY STRICT
ATTENTION TO THEM, THEY
DRIFT BY UNNOTICED AND
ARE FOREVER LOST

TIME AND SPACE
ARE DELICATE AND
ELUSIVE THINGS

THE SAME IS TRUE
OF DREAMS



THE PLANET IS
KNOWN AS CALDOR

IT IS THE FOURTH PLANET
OF THE STAR CHALFALON



CHALFALON IS SITUATED ABOUT 500,000
LIGHT YEARS FROM THAT SECTOR OF
SPACE KNOWN AS THE DARK SECTOR

ABOUT A MILLION YEARS
AGO THE DARK SECTOR
WAS KNOWN TO ITS
INHABITANTS AS THE
MILKY WAY

Aftermath

I'LL BE
DAMNED

JUDGING FROM THE WAY
I FEEL, I DO BELIEVE I'M
STILL AMONG THE LIVING

ANK

BY A S
HOLY
EYE



SO, YOU'RE STILL
BREATHING. I NANT
CUT. **GOOD**. I'VE
GOT QUESTIONS.

HOW?

JUST BEFORE THE END I
INDIRECTLY TAPPED INTO THE
POWER OF THE INFINITE AND
USED THOSE ENERGIES TO
CREATE A PROTECTIVE **MYSTICAL**
BUBBLE ABOUT US.

THAT SPELL ALSO PLACED
US IN A DEEP STATE OF
SUSPENDED ANIMATION.



WHILE WE'VE BEEN HIBERNATING
MY **ASTRAL EGO** HAS BEEN
DIRECTING US TO THIS PLANET.

MY **MYSTICAL SENSES**
HAVE TOLD ME THAT YOUR
DESTINY AWAITS YOU HERE.

WHAT?



WHAT
ABOUT ZA
AND THE
GIRLS?

THEY
LIVE.

THEY STOOD IN
THE HEART OF
INFINITY'S RELEASE
THAT FORCE PLUS
SPELLS OF MY OWN
TRANSFORMED
THEM.

CHANGED THEM INTO
SOMETHING **WONDEROUS**.

THEY ARE NOW A
NEW SPECIES OF
BEING THAT THE
STARS HAVE NEVER
BEFORE SEEN.

THEY'VE ESCAPED
THE WEAKNESS OF
THE FLESH. THEY ARE
NOW BEINGS OF
PURE THOUGHT
AND ENERGY.

THEY ARE
NOW GODS.

THE **MILKY**
WAY SACRIFICED
ITSELF SO
THAT THEY
MIGHT LIVE.

YOU MEAN IT'S
ALL GONE ?

WE'RE THE ONLY
ONES LEFT ?

YES I KNOW IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT EVERYONE
AND EVERYTHING WE EVER KNEW IS NO MORE

WE'RE STANDING
IN AN ENTIRELY
DIFFERENT GALAXY

WHERE ?

WE'RE ABOUT 500,000 LIGHT
YEARS FROM WHAT WAS ONCE
THE UPPER EDGE OF THE
MILKY WAY

500,000 LIGHT YEARS ?

HOW LONG WERE
WE IN THAT
BUBBLE OF YOURS ?

I'D SAY ABOUT A
MILLION YEARS

I'M AFRAID THE
NATURE OF THE
SPELL I CAST
WOULDN'T ALLOW
THE BUBBLE TO
TRAVEL AS FAST
AS THE SPEED
OF LIGHT

YOU SEE, THE
SPHERE WAS
MOSTLY
CONDENSED
LIGHT
PARTICLES

A MILLION
YEARS

ENTIRE
CIVILIZATIONS
HAVE PROBABLY
RISEN AND
CRUMBLED DURING
THAT TIME

HELL, PLANETS HAVE BEEN
BORN AND DIED WHILE
WE'VE NAPPED IN YOUR
LITTLE GREEN BUBBLE,

AND EVERYONE
I'VE EVER KNOWN
IS NOW DEAD AND
FORGOTTEN FOR
OVER A MILLION
YEARS

I'M AFRAID SO

AND WE
KILLED
THEM

I PREFER TO THINK OF IT AS *SAVING* THEM
THE HORROR OF ZYGOTEAN SLAVERY AND
ALLOWING THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
BIRTH OF A NEW RACE OF GODS

I NOTICED YOU
DIDN'T STICK AROUND
FOR THE BIRTH

I HAD THE
POWER TO
SAVE MYSELF
SO I DID

WELL, WHAT
ABOUT ME?
WHY'D YOU
DRAG ME
ALONG?

WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK I
WANT TO GO ON
LIVING AFTER
WHAT WE DID?

YOU MUST GO ON
YOUR WORK IS NOT
YET FINISHED

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

CALDOR AND ITS SURROUNDING
STAR SYSTEMS ARE CHIEFLY
POPULATED WITH HUMAN AND
SEMI-HUMAN BEINGS, AS WAS
THE MILKY WAY

IN FACT, OUR TWO
GALAXIES BEAR
MANY STRIKING
SIMILARITIES

THIS SPACE SECTOR
HAS NEED OF A
PERSON OF YOUR
PARTICULAR
QUALITIES AND
TALENTS

TALENTS

YOU MEAN, LIKE MY TALENT FOR *KILLING*?

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT
IN MIND, AKNATON?

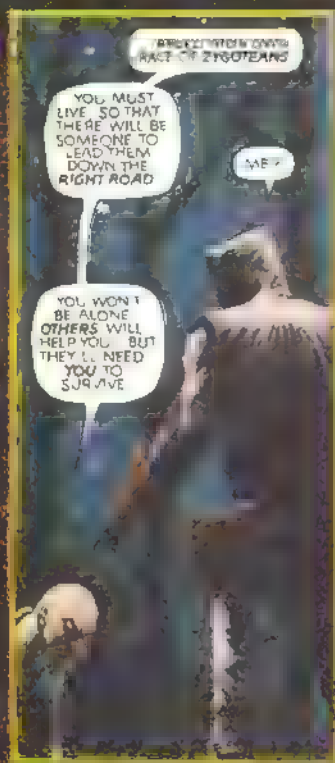
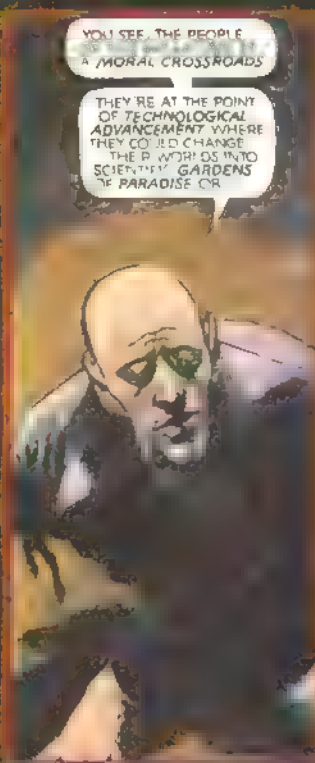
WE'VE ALREADY
DESTROYED AN
ENTIRE GALAXY
ISN'T THAT
ENOUGH
FOR YOU?

WHAT'S IT
TAKE TO
QUENCH YOUR
BLOOD LUST?

HOW MANY
MORE MUST
DIE BEFORE
YOU STOP?!

DO YOU THINK
I'M GOING TO
WATCH IT
HAPPEN ALL
OVER AGAIN?!

WON'T ALLOW





WHY ME?

BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN WITH ME AND NOW KNOW THE WAY

YOU'VE COME FROM THE HALLS OF DEATH WITH A MESSAGE OF LIFE



MAKE THEM HEAR THAT MESSAGE VANTH, OR SUFFER THE SAME DAMNATION I SUFFER NOW

YOU MUST EITHER BE THEIR SAVIOR OR THEIR DESTROYER

DESTROYER?



YES, THE INFINITY HORN YET EXISTS, AND YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND IT

IT RESTS AMONG THE STARS GONE BLACK



IT AWAITS YOUR FAILURE

DO NOT FAIL!

SUCH A FATE IS A TERRIBLE THING TO FACE AND AN IMPOSSIBLE BURDEN TO CARRY AFTERWARDS



YOU MEAN

YES

I GOADED YOU INTO KILLING ME



DO YOU THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY MAN WHO FEARS HIS DREAMS AND MEMORIES?



THE MESSAGE MUST GO FORTH

BUT I'LL NOT BE THE MESSENGER THIS TIME



I'M SORRY VANTH

ALONE

NOTHING
THAT WAS
S ANYMORE

ONLY THE
EMPTYNESS
MEMORIES,
PAIN AND
GUILT REMAIN

THE NIGHTS THAT ARE YET TO BE HOLD A PROMISE
OF NIGHTMARE AND HORROR

AND THE
CHANCES FOR
ABSOLUTION
SEEM REMOTE

FOR YESTERDAY'S SINS LIVE FOREVER
WITHIN ONE'S HEART, AND THE
DAMNED ALWAYS WALK ALONE

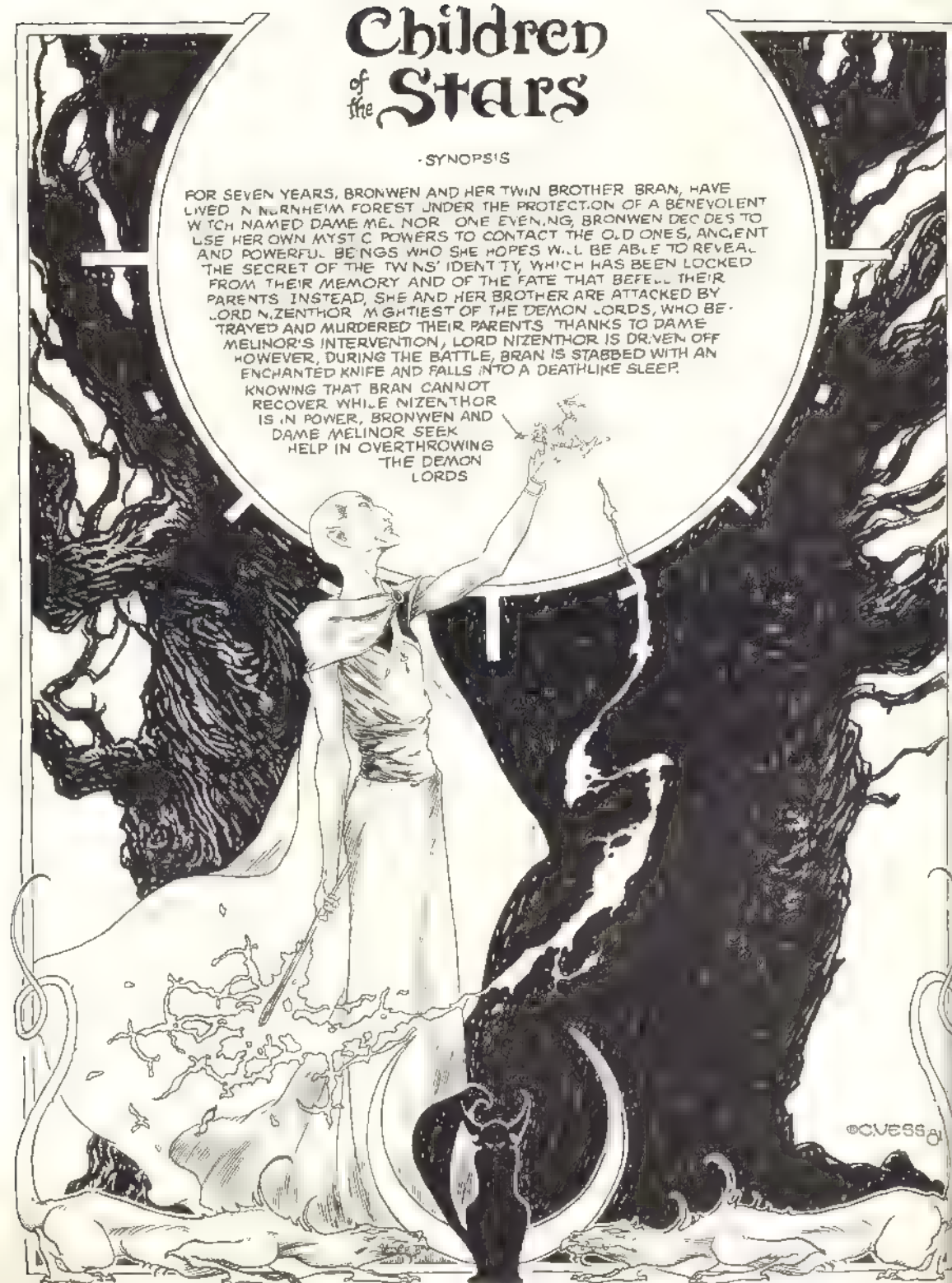
ALWAYS
ALONE

Children of the Stars

SYNOPSIS

FOR SEVEN YEARS, BRONWEN AND HER TWIN BROTHER BRAN, HAVE LIVED IN NURNHEIM FOREST UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BENEVOLENT WITCH NAMED DAME MELINOR. ONE EVENING, BRONWEN DECIDES TO USE HER OWN MYSTIC POWERS TO CONTACT THE OLD ONES, ANCIENT AND POWERFUL BEINGS WHO SHE HOPES WILL BE ABLE TO REVEAL THE SECRET OF THE TWINS' IDENTITY, WHICH HAS BEEN LOCKED FROM THEIR MEMORY AND OF THE FATE THAT BEFELL THEIR PARENTS. INSTEAD, SHE AND HER BROTHER ARE ATTACKED BY LORD NIZENTHOR, MIGHTIEST OF THE DEMON LORDS, WHO BETRAYED AND MURDERED THEIR PARENTS. THANKS TO DAME MELINOR'S INTERVENTION, LORD NIZENTHOR IS DRIVEN OFF. HOWEVER, DURING THE BATTLE, BRAN IS STABBED WITH AN ENCHANTED KNIFE AND FALLS INTO A DEATHLIKE SLEEP.

KNOWING THAT BRAN CANNOT RECOVER WHILE NIZENTHOR IS IN POWER, BRONWEN AND DAME MELINOR SEEK HELP IN OVERTHROWING THE DEMON LORDS.

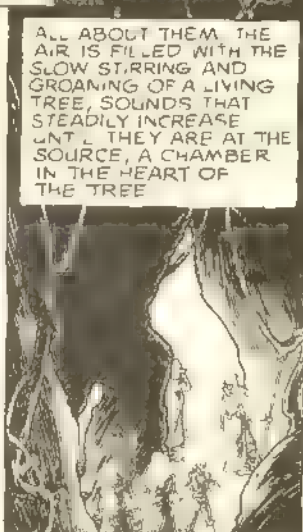


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Children-of-the-Stars

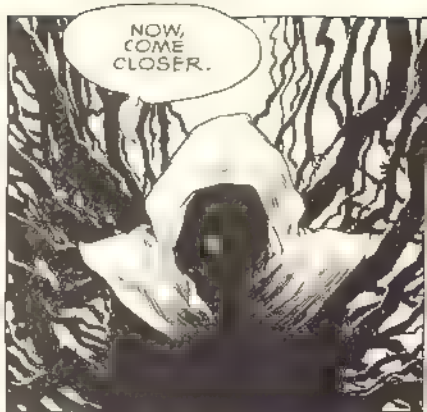


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NO, BRONWEN,
WE ARE NOT THE OLD
ONES, BUT A RACE THAT
HONORS THEM STILL! WE
HAVE LONG KNOWN THAT
YOUR PATH WOULD LEAD
YOU TO US AND HAVE
PREPARED FOR YOUR
ARRIVAL!



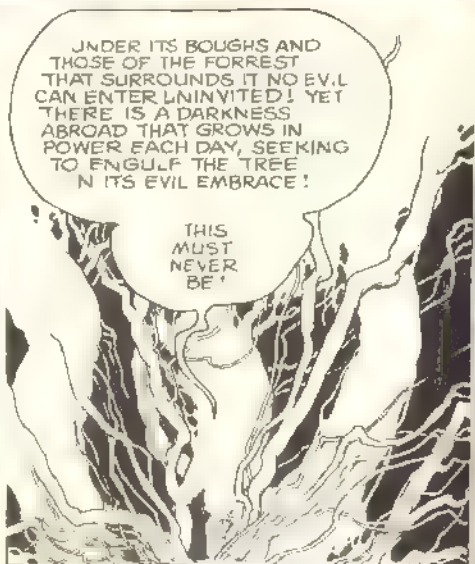
NOW,
COME
CLOSER.



KNEEL BEFORE
ME, CHILD OF THE
STARS, AND ATTEND
MY WORDS!

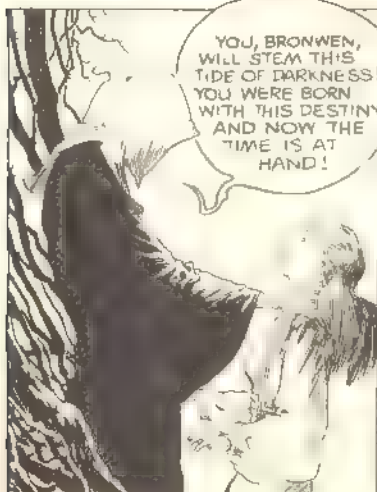


ALL ABOUT YOU IS THE
TREE OF LIFE! THE HEART
BEAT OF THE LAND! ITS
ROOTS PULSE WITH THE
RHYTHM OF ALL LIVING
THINGS. AS IT LIVES,
SO DOES THE LAND.



UNDER ITS BOUGHS AND
THOSE OF THE FORREST
THAT SURROUNDS IT NO EVIL
CAN ENTER UNINVITED! YET
THERE IS A DARKNESS
ABROAD THAT GROWS IN
POWER EACH DAY, SEEKING
TO ENGULF THE TREE
IN ITS EVIL EMBRACE!

THIS
MUST
NEVER
BE!



YOU, BRONWEN,
WILL STEM THIS
TIDE OF DARKNESS!
YOU WERE BORN
WITH THIS DESTINY,
AND NOW THE
TIME IS AT
HAND!



BUT FIRST YOU
MUST SEE THE SEEDS
OF THAT DESTINY, PLANT
ED IN YOUR PAST!

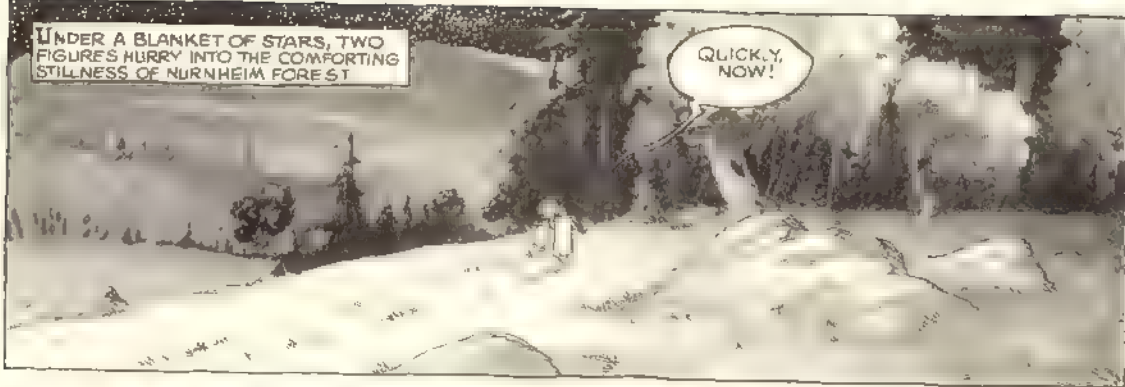
"LET THE BLANKS WITHIN YOUR
MIND NOW BE FILLED WITH...
MEMORY!"



A SWIRLING ARRAY OF COLOR
AND SOUND SEIZES BRONWEN'S
THOUGHTS, SWEEPING THEM
FAR AWAY FROM THE TREE
AND FROM ALL RECENT
EVENTS!

UNDER A BLANKET OF STARS, TWO FIGURES HURRY INTO THE COMFORTING STILLNESS OF NURNHEIM FOREST

QUICKLY, NOW!



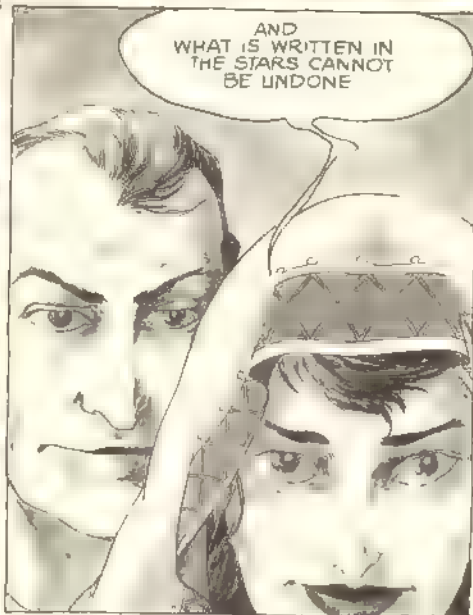
TO LAY THEIR PRECIOUS BURDEN UNDER ITS PROTECTIVE BOUGHS

OUR CHILDREN THEY ARE YOUNG FOR SO HARSH A FATE TO RULE THEIR LIVES!

WE HAVE BEEN PROMISED THAT HERE IN THIS FOREST THEY WILL FIND PEACE FOR A TIME! WE CAN LEAVE THEM WITH NO MORE THAN THAT



AND WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE STARS CANNOT BE UNDONE

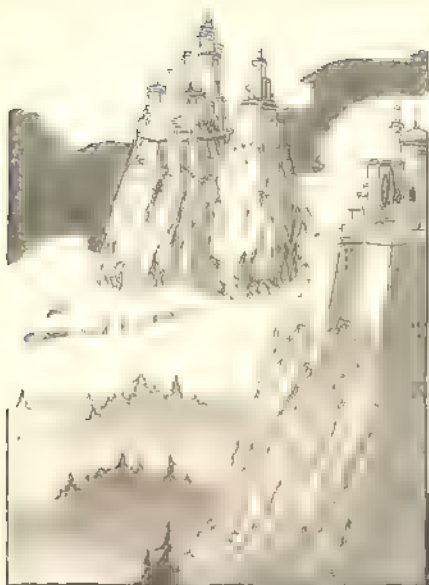


BRAN, BRONWEN I GIVE YOU THE GIFT OF FORGETFULNESS. ALL SAVE YOUR NAME'S I TAKE FROM YOU, BUT WHEN THE TIME OF RECKONING'S AT HAND THE KEY TO THESE MEMORIES WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU.

THEN YOU WILL KNOW WHY WE DID THIS THING FOR AN AGE OF EVIL IS COMING, AND YOU MUST HAVE THE TIME TO GROW IN STRENGTH AND WISDOM SO THAT YOU MAY FACE THE POWERS OF THE DARK!

COME IT IS TIME FOR US TO RETURN HOME





HOME! THEIR RACE WAS AN ANCIENT ONE FOR UNTOLD AGES. THEY HAD LIVED HIGH ABOVE THE FIELDS OF MORTAL MEN, IN A CITY CLOSE TO THE STARS. THERE, THEY WERE CONTENT TO PONDER THE SECRETS OF THE NIGHTTIME SKY, SEEKING ONLY WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE FROM THE CELESTIAL BODIES. THE CENTERPIECE OF THIS RACE AND ITS RELIGION LAY ON ONE OF THE SEVEN HILLS, SURROUNDED BY A SACRED GROVE... THE TEMPLE OF THE STARS!



OH, OLD ONES WHO GUIDE THE STARS AND OUR LIVES, WE ASK FORGIVENESS FOR OUR PEOPLE WE COULDN'T KEEP THEM FROM WALKING THE PATH OF FOLLY.

NOW THE TEMPLE LAY DESERTED, A PIECE OF STONES FILLED WITH THE ECHOES OF THE PAST. THE PEOPLE'S VERY CONTENTMENT HAD LED TO STAGNATION AND BOREDOM AND, IN THEIR BOREDOM, THEY HAD SOUGHT NEW MYSTERIES AND BEGUN TO DESIRE POWER.

THE STARS HAVE GIVEN US HOPE THAT OUR CHILDREN SHALL RIGHT THE GREAT WRONG THAT WILL TAKE PLACE THIS DAY. WE MUST TRUST IN THAT!



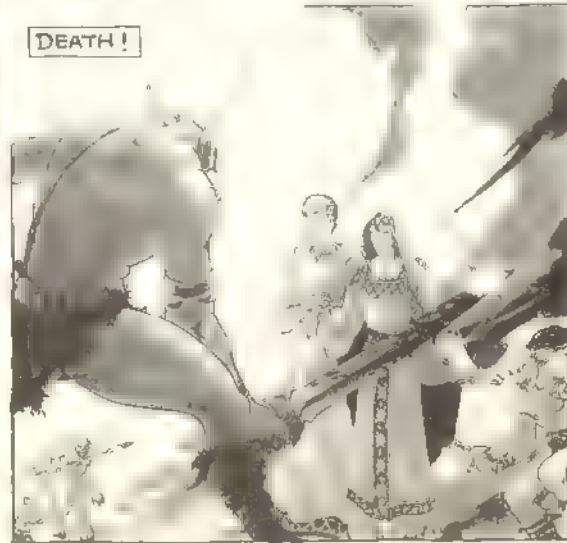
SMILING STRANGERS HAD COME, GIVING FREELY OF THEIR OWN KNOWLEDGE TO ANY WHO ASKED, BEGINNING ALL THOSE WHO LISTENED, AND ASKING FOR LITTLE IN RETURN. BUT THE STRANGER'S HEARTS WERE BLACK WITH EVIL AND THEIR WAYS LED ONLY INTO DARKNESS, A DARKNESS THAT BLANKETED THE LIGHT OF THE STARS AND CREEPT INTO THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE. IN THEIR BLINDNESS, THE PEOPLE STUMBLED EAGERLY DOWN THE NEW ROAD. THE OLD WAYS LAY FORGOTTEN, UNUSED BY ALL SAVE A FEW.

YES YOU ARE RIGHT. OUR AGE IS AT AN END! COME, LET US JOIN OUR PEOPLE!





THE STRANGERS BECAME
THEIR NEW GODS BUT THEY
WERE GODS OF CHAOS AND
EVER, LAST NIGHT CHIEF
AMONG THEM WAS LORD
NIZENTHOR, WHO HAD SOWN
THE FIRST SEEDS OF DIS
CONTENT AMONG THE
PEOPLE OF THE STARS..





IT IS
FINISHED!

NO, NOT FINISHED YET! TWO
CHILDREN HAVE ESCAPED
THIS DESTRUCTION

THEN WE MUST
FIND THESE TWO.



THEN THE IMAGE'S FADE, AND
BRONWEN IS BACK IN THE
PRESENT AGAIN

THE PAST IS PAST,
BRONWEN. YOU ARE PART
OF ITS FUTURE--ITS
DESTINY!

BUT HOW CAN
YOU KNOW SUCH
THINGS? WHO
ARE YOU?

WE ARE AS OLD AS THE LAND
ITSELF. WE WATCHED YOUR RACE
RISE TO GLORIOUS BEAUTY AND
TOPPLE INTO THE ABYSS. WE
HAVE SEEN DEVIL AND MAN
DEMON AND BEAST CRAWL
FROM THE PIT, STRIVING
FOR VAIN GLORY.

EVERY GROAN OF THIS
TREE IS A NEW CREATURE
BEING BORN. EVERY CON-
VOLUTION OF ITS ROOTS AN
EON OF TIME. WE WATCH
WE WAIT. WE RECORD

BUT NOW WE MUST
ACT.

ALL THAT IS HERE
TEETERS ON THE BRINK
OF CHAOS.

THE DARK HAS GROWN
POWERFUL AND SEVERED
THE LAND FROM CONTACT
WITH THE OLD ONES. ONLY
THROUGH US CAN THE
OLD ONES SPEAK
TO YOU!

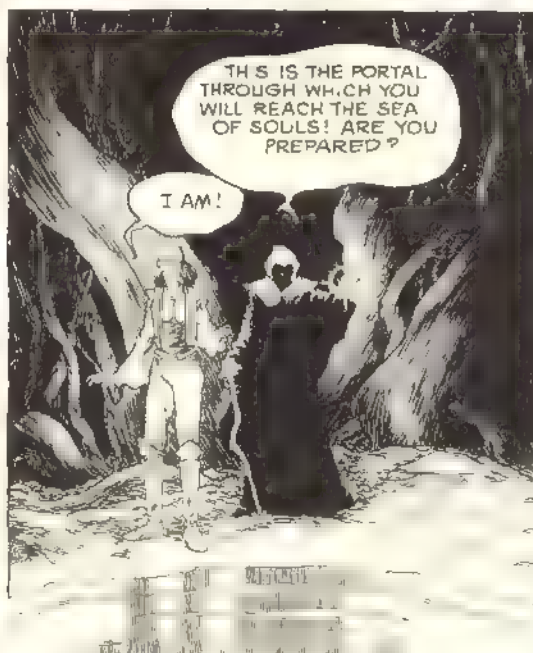
HEAR THEIR WORDS!

AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF
TIME THE OLD ONES FASHIONED
THE SOUL OF EVERY BEING THAT
WAS TO BE AND PLACED EACH
IN A SINGLE STONE. THESE
STONES BECAME THE
SHORELINE OF A VAST
ETERNAL SEA.

EVERY WORLD IN EVERY
TIME HAS ITS SHORELINE
AND ITS SEA! YOUTH, LOVE,
CRUELTY... ALL ARE
WORN AWAY BY THE
SWEEP OF THAT
SEA!

THE LORDS OF DARKNESS
MUST BE STOPPED! LORD
NIZENTHOR IS THE MOST
POWERFUL OF THEM, AND
HIS DEATH WILL BREAK
THEIR HOLD ON THIS
LAND.

SO, YOU MUST GO TO
THIS BEACH, FIND THE
STONE THAT IS LORD
NIZENTHOR'S SOUL,
AND DESTROY IT!



CHILDREN OF THE STARS continues next issue

WEIRDWORLD: The DRAGONMASTER of KLARN

written by
DOUG MOENCH

drawn by
JOHN BUSCEMA

rendered by
MARIE SEVERIN

lettered by
JOE ROSEN

painted by
STEVE OLIFF

INTRODUCTION

Weirdworld got its start in January, 1976. It first appeared as a nine page black-and-white story, *An Ugly Mirror on Weirdworld*, written by **Doug Moench** and drawn by **Mike Ploog**, and was published in the first (and only) issue of *Marvel Super Action*.

An *Ugly Mirror on Weirdworld* introduces Tyndall, a young innocent who's recently come to live in a small woodland community in a place called Weirdworld. Tyndall is plagued by loss of memory—all he knows about himself is his name and the fact that he comes from a place called Klarn—and he is subtly different from the natives of the village, for one thing, he has pointed ears. The villagers accept Tyndall only grudgingly and when their village is repeatedly attacked by monstrous Night fangers, the villagers appoint Tyndall to the perilous job of saving them. He is to go into the Region of Shadow, to find and destroy

what they call "the heart of evil." When this "evil" proves to be a girl like himself, Tyndall realizes that he was the evil his neighbors feared, and that they have sent him to destroy the future of his own kind. Tyndall and the girl Velanna, set out to find a better place for themselves.

The second Weirdworld adventure, *The Lord of Tyndall's Quest*, was published in October, 1977 in *Marvel Premiere* #38. The story—which was eighteen pages long, printed in four-color—was written by **Doug Moench**, drawn by **Mike Ploog**, and inked by **Alex Niño**. The opening of *The Lord of Tyndall's Quest* reprises the ending of the previous adventure, with Tyndall forced to draw uncomfortable conclusions about his place on Weirdworld. He and Velanna (who, like Tyndall, remembers nothing of herself except her name and the fact that she comes from Klarn) are pitted against a devious wizard named Cristhane, holding Velanna hos-

tage, Cristhane forces Tyndall into battle with wax monsters, dragons, and girls who turn into deadly swamp serpents. Before Cristhane meets a deservedly bad end, Tyndall and Velanna learn that Klarn (which Tyndall briefly visits) is a ring-shaped island floating in the sky, above the Region of Shadow, which is created by Klarn's presence. Unfortunately, this knowledge doesn't bring the pair any closer to their home.

The next published Weirldworld story, *The Warriors of the Shadow Realm*, appeared in issues #11-13 of *Marvel Super Special* (June, August, and October, 1979). It was written by **Doug Moench**, drawn by **John Buscema**, inked by **Rudy Nebres** and painted for full-process color reproduction by **Peter Ledger** with a last-minute deadline assist from **Steve Oliff**.

In this three-part story, Tyndall and Velanna, who have now identified themselves as elves, have teamed up with Mud-Butt

an admirably cantankerous dwarf, so named because he constantly picks fights and consistently ends them by being knocked on his backside in the mud. Moreover, Tyndall now retroactively knows that his first home on Weirldworld was called Dwarf-haven, and that the suspicious, insular neighbors who sent him to kill Velanna were dwarfs.

Warriors of the Shadows

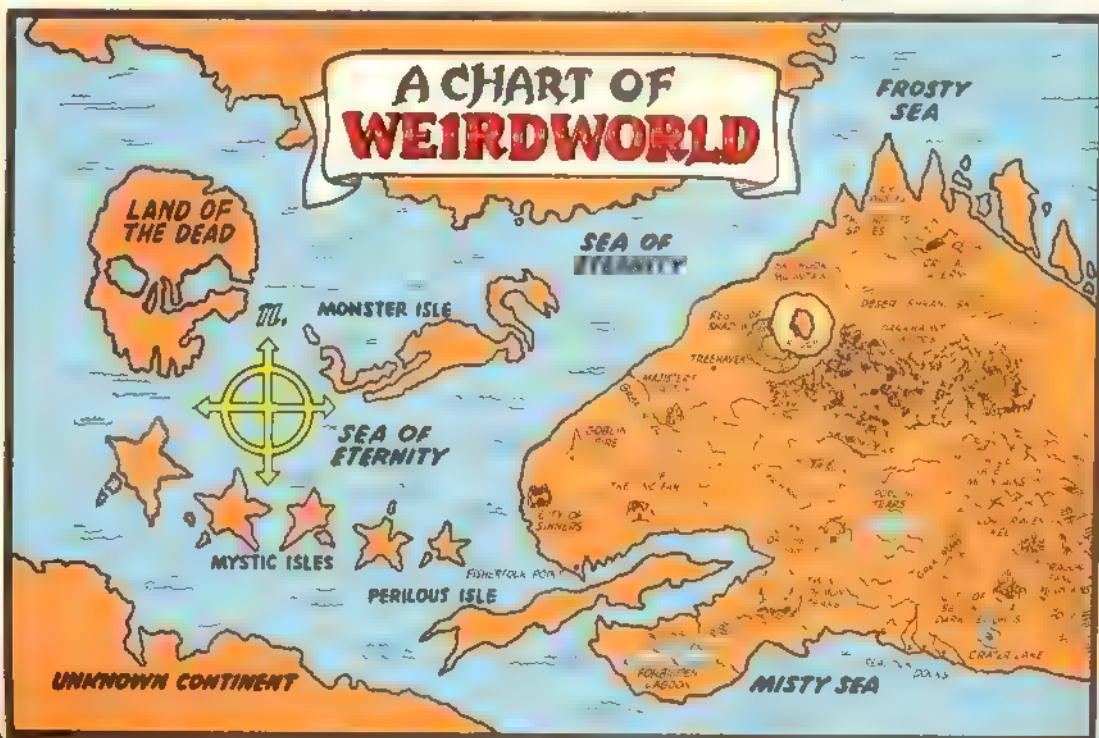
Realm is far broader in scope and more intricate than either of its predecessors. In it, Tyndall, Velanna, and Mud-Butt lace evil on a grand scale, as Darklens, the malevolent sorcerer who created Weirldworld, tries to resurrect his own dead bones and return to power, aided by Nighttangers, Dark Riders, mysterious Wraiths who live in the Darklens gems, and Zarthon, a fellow sorcerer of deceptively benevolent aspect. Guided and protected by a white wolf in reality (one of the elemental forces of good itself), the elves and the dwarf contribute to the overthrow of Zarthon and

Darklens and the very salvation of Weirldworld.

In addition to the story pages, the three *Super Specials* were full of poems, articles, and background notes about Weirldworld. In addition, there was a map of Weirldworld, clarifying and establishing much about the topography of the planet.

Finally, there are several as-yet unpublished Weirldworld episodes, which were drawn for the four color comics and will be scheduled sometime in the near future. These detail the first meeting between the two childlike elves and the irascible hedonistic dwarf. During the course of the unpublished stories, the trio meet and defeat Lord Raven, yet another nasty necromancer, and Mud-Butt acquires his handy-but mysterious sword, the power rod.

And now, by popular demand, we proudly present the newest chapter in the Weirldworld saga: *The Dragonmaster of Klarn*.



PART 1 A GAME THE GODS PLAY

SECURE IN A VAULT OF HEAVENS BEYOND THE MANY MOONS, THE HIGHER ONES DWELL ON A SECRET PLANE. THEIR EXISTENCE IS MUCH LIKE A CUNNINGLY CONTRIVED GAME -- SIMPLE ON THE SURFACE, YET INFINITELY COMPLEX IN ITS SUBTLE WORKINGS.

YOU BAIT
YOUR TRAPS
C. EVERLY
DARK ONE

AND YOU
GROW CARELESS
MY OPPONENT

OR HAVE YOUR
POWERS MERELY
FADED, EVEN AS
YOUR PALLOR HAS
ALWAYS FADED
AGAINST OUR
SETTING?

NOOED, SINCE
TIMES DAWN YOUR
SIDE HAS EVER LACKED
A CERTAIN **REALISTIC**
CONTRAST

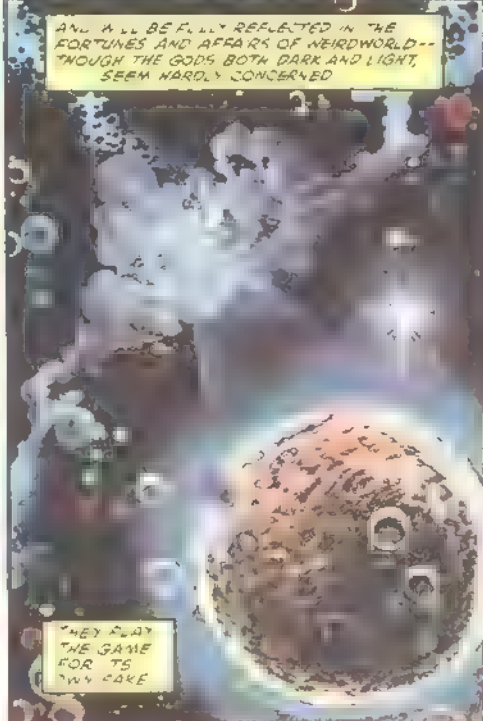
CONTRAST? IN
TRUTH, YOU WOULD
TAINT ME WITH A
TOUCH OF DARKNESS
TO TIP THE BALANCE
IN YOUR FAVOR

THE DARK
CHAMPION'S NEXT
MOVE IS CRUCIAL --
AND SURELY THE TURNING
POINT OF THE ETERNAL
CONTEST



YOU READ ME WELL, MY OPPONENT,
FOR YOUR TIME OF CAMOUFLAGE
HAS PASSED

WITH MY LAST
MOVE YOU SEE
THE STALEMATE
HAS ALREADY
SHIFTED



AND ALL BEFULLY REFLECTED IN THE
FORTUNES AND AFFAIRS OF NEIRDWORLD--
THOUGH THE GODS BOTH DARK AND LIGHT,
SEEM HARDLY CONCERNED

THEY PLAY
THE GAME
FOR TS
MY COKE



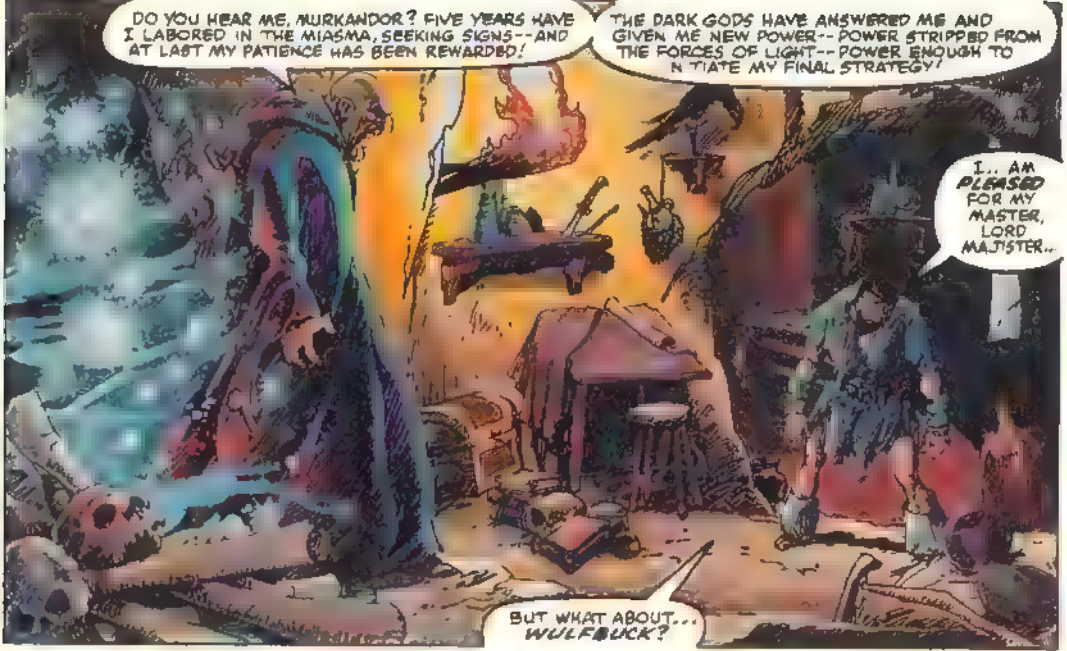
LEAVING THEIR RESPECTIVE FOLLOWERS ON THE STRANGE
WORLD BELOW TO SUFFER OR TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES

THE MOMENT HAS
FINALLY COME MURKANDOR,
THE TIME TO ACT AT LAST

THE PORTENTS MESH
AND INTERLOCK IN DARK
HARMONY THE AGGLERING
INTERWINE OF BLACK MIST
AND SILVER LIGHT SPEAKS
TO ME IN THE THUNDERING
VOICE OF DEMONS AND
THE VOICE PROMISES
CONQUEST! DOMINION!

VICTORY!

RIGHT NOW AT
THE DEMESNE OF
BLACK MAJESTER,
SLEEPING IS
UNKNOWN

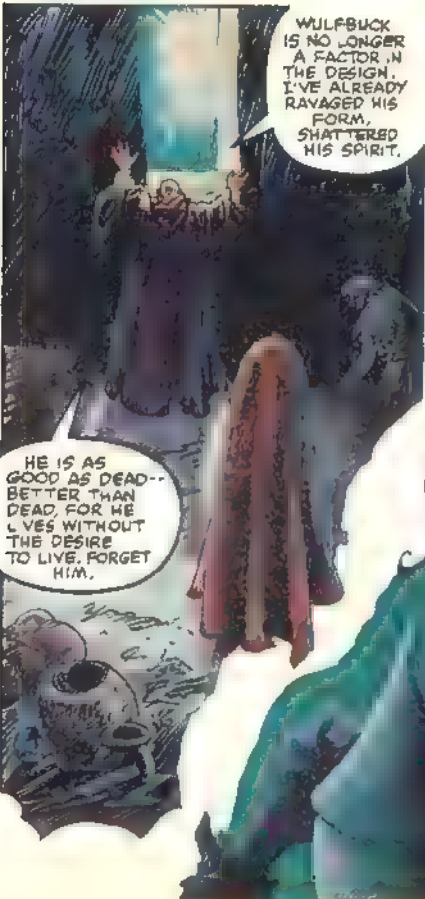


DO YOU HEAR ME, MURKANDOR? FIVE YEARS HAVE I LABORED IN THE MIASMA, SEEKING SIGNS--AND AT LAST MY PATIENCE HAS BEEN REWARDED!

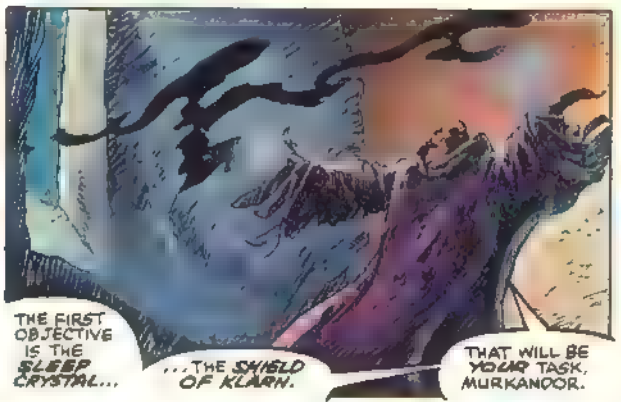
THE DARK GODS HAVE ANSWERED ME AND GIVEN ME NEW POWER-- POWER STRIPPED FROM THE FORCES OF LIGHT-- POWER ENOUGH TO INITIATE MY FINAL STRATEGY!

I... AM PLEASED FOR MY MASTER, LORD MAJISTER...

BUT WHAT ABOUT... WULFBUCK?



WULFBUCK IS NO LONGER A FACTOR IN THE DESIGN. I'VE ALREADY RAVAGED HIS FORM, SHATTERED HIS SPIRIT.

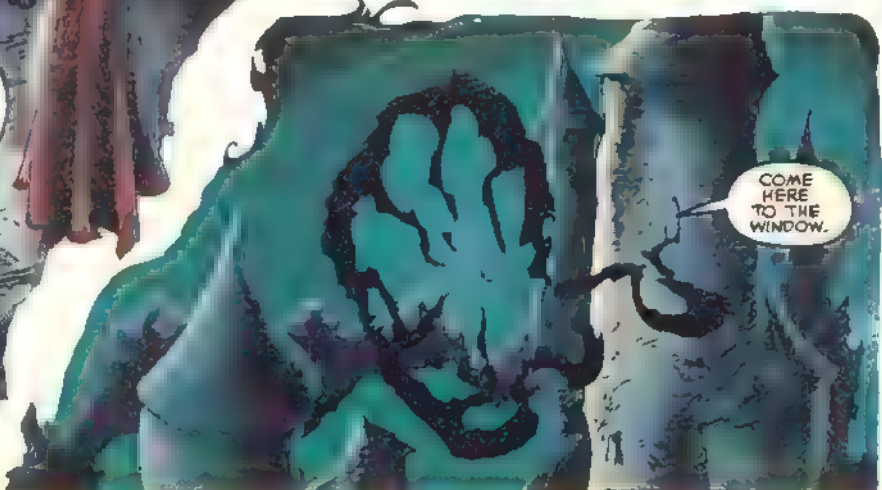


THE FIRST OBJECTIVE IS THE SLEEP CRYSTAL...

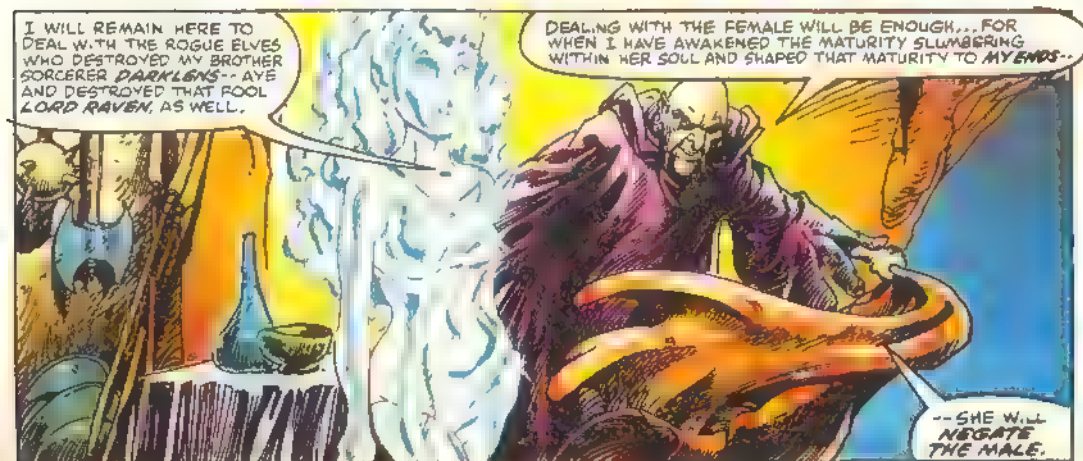
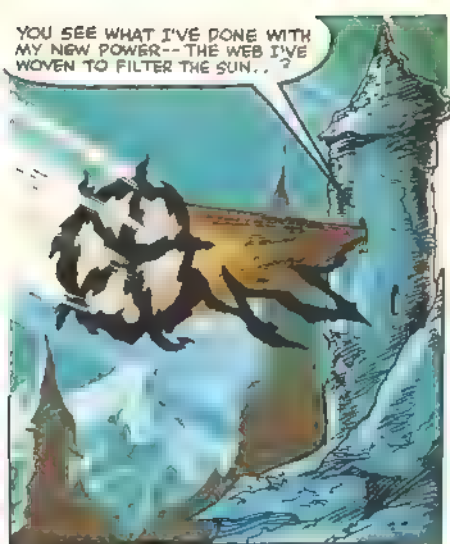
...THE SHIELD OF KLARN.

THAT WILL BE YOUR TASK, MURKANDOR.

HE IS AS GOOD AS DEAD-- BETTER THAN DEAD, FOR HE LIVES WITHOUT THE DESIRE TO LIVE. FORGET HIM.



COME HERE TO THE WINDOW.



JUST LIKE THIS GLASS STATUE, SHE IS BUT A HOLLOW SHELL.

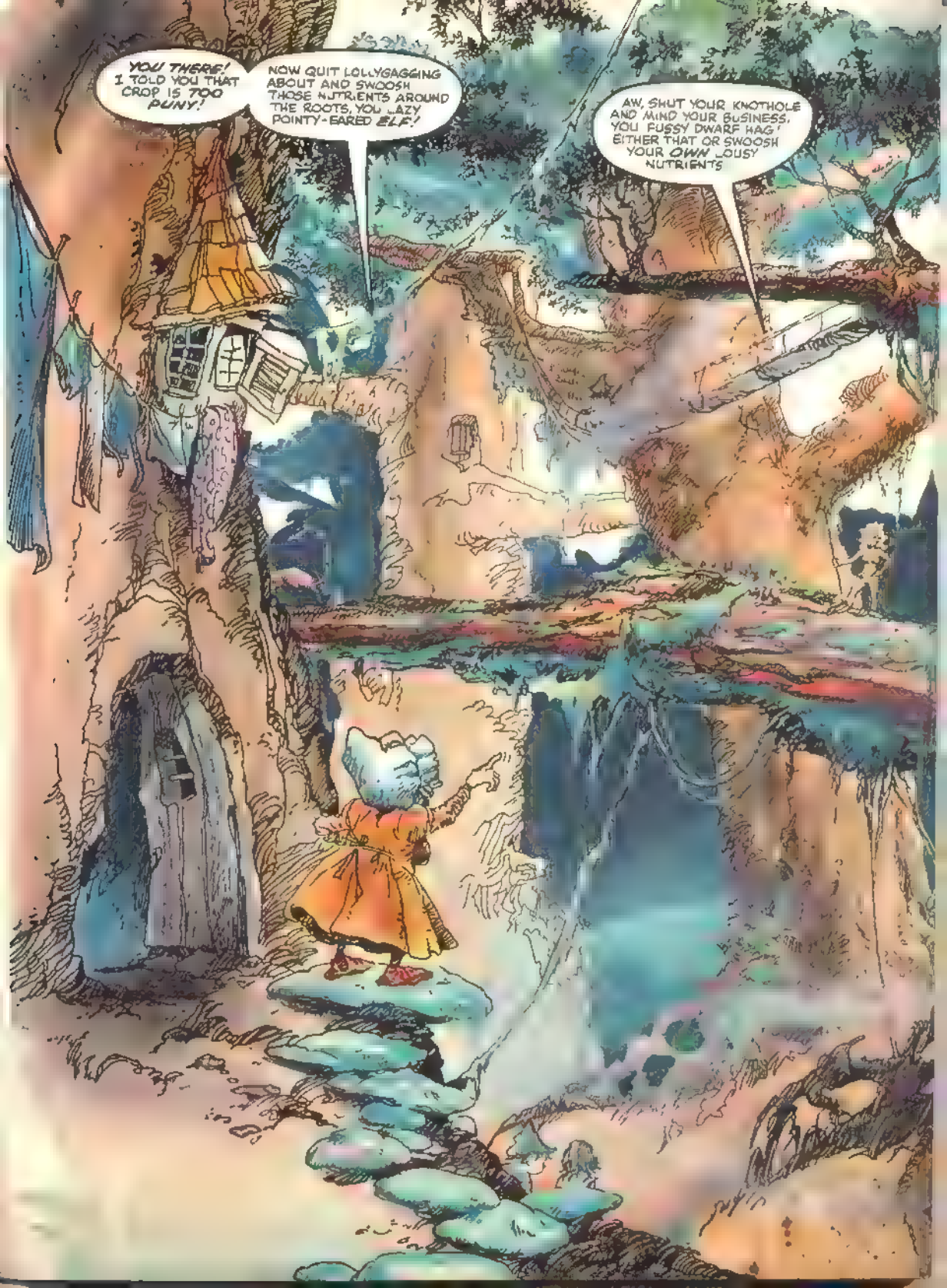
... A RECEPTACLE FOR THE DARK LIGHT OF MY NEW POWER.

DON'T KNOW WHAT'S COME OVER ME, BUT I SURE FEEL FUNNY. NOT RIGHT SOMEHOW. ESPECIALLY MY FEET AND I CERTAINLY DON'T FEEL LIKE DOING ALL THESE FARM CHORES.

"STIR THE TROUGH NUTRENTS!"
"PICK THE NUTS!" "CULTIVATE THE FRUIT!" "SCOUR THE CAUSEWAYS!"
"CHECK THE VINE KNOTS!" "PRUNE THE INTERFERING BRANCHES."
"PLANT THE SEEDLINGS IN THE NEW TROUGHS."

"CLEAN THE WATER-CATCH BOLE-CROOKS!"
"HARVEST THE FUNGI!" "WORK, WORK, WORK!"

TREEHAVEN IS NOTHING BUT WORK!



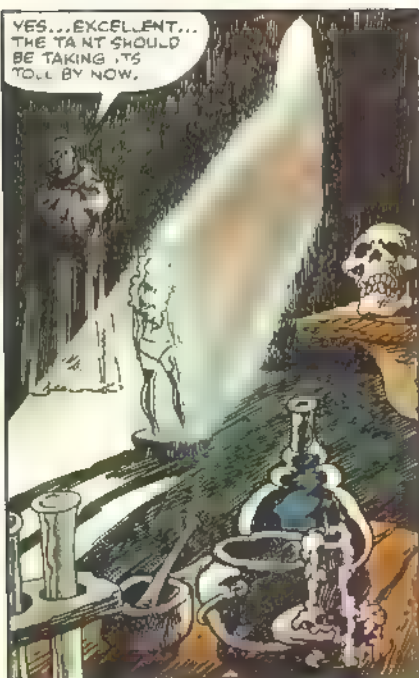
YOU THERE!
I TOLD YOU THAT
CROP IS TOO
PUNY!

NOW QUIT LOLLYGAGGING
ABOUT AND SWOOSH
THOSE NUTRIENTS AROUND
THE ROOTS, YOU LAZY
POINTY-EARED ELF!

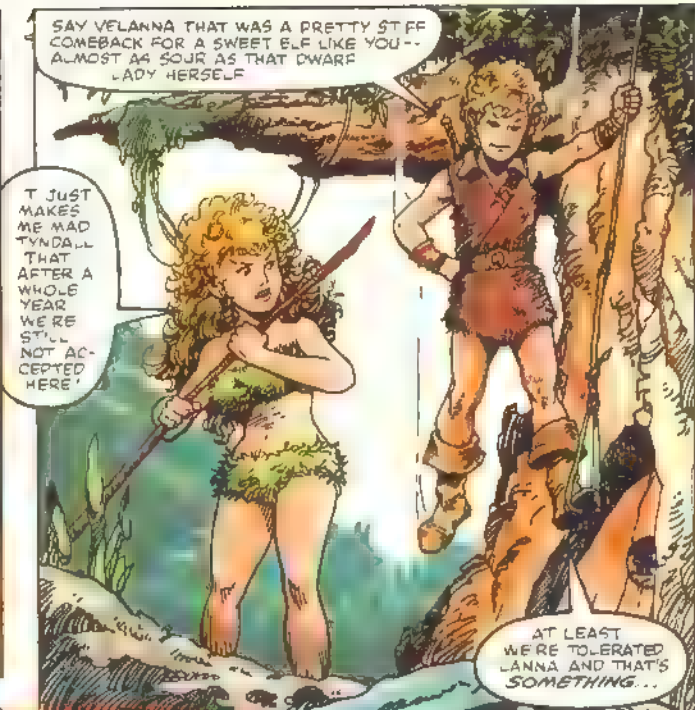
AW, SHUT YOUR KNOTHOLE
AND MIND YOUR BUSINESS.
YOU FUSSY DWARF HAG!
EITHER THAT OR SWOOSH
YOUR OWN LOUSY
NUTRIENTS



I'M SICK OF IT!
AND I'M SICK OF YOU,
TOO, SICK OF THIS WHOLE
LOUSY JUNGLE YOU
CALL A TOWN-- IT'S
CRAWLING WITH
CRABBY DWARFS!



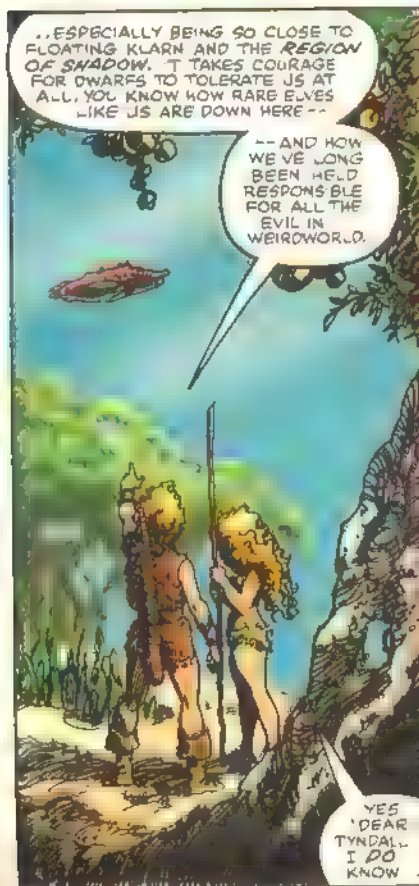
YES...EXCELLENT...
THE TA NT SHOULD
BE TAKING ITS
TOLL BY NOW.



SAY VELANNA THAT WAS A PRETTY STEE
COMEBACK FOR A SWEET ELF LIKE YOU--
ALMOST AS SOUR AS THAT DWARF
LADY HERSELF

T JUST
MAKES
ME MAD
TYNDAL
THAT
AFTER A
WHOLE
YEAR
WE'RE
STILL
NOT AC-
CEPTED
HERE!

AT LEAST
WE'RE TOLERATED
LANNA AND THAT'S
SOMETHING...



..ESPECIALLY BEING SO CLOSE TO
FLOATING KLARN AND THE REGION
OF SHADOW. IT TAKES COURAGE
FOR DWARFS TO TOLERATE US AT
ALL. YOU KNOW HOW RARE ELVES
LIKE US ARE DOWN HERE --

-- AND HOW
WE'VE LONG
BEEN HELD
RESPONSIBLE
FOR ALL THE
EVIL IN
WEIRDWORLD.

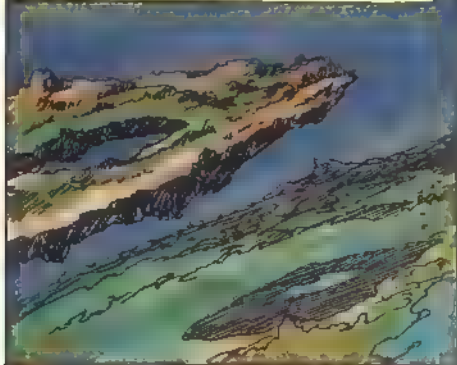
YES
DEAR
TYNDAL--
I DO
KNOW



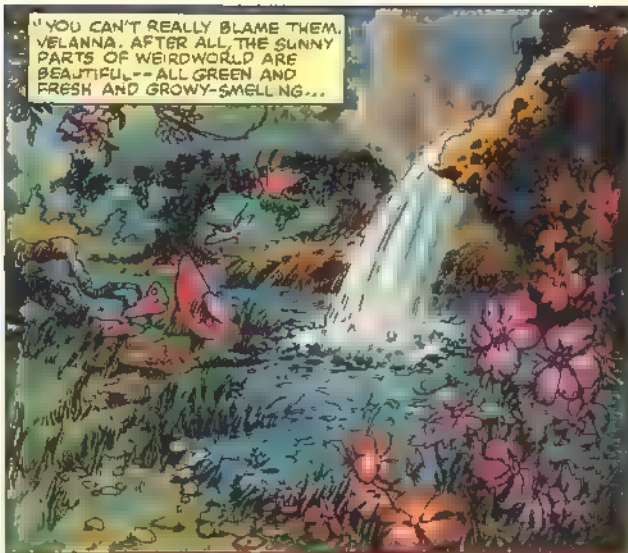
AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE THAT VILE
WIZARD DARK.ENS HAD TO GO AND
UPROOT OUR LAND OF KLARN AND
SET IT FLOATING IN THE SKY!

THE VILLAIN.
WHO GAVE HIM
THE RIGHT?

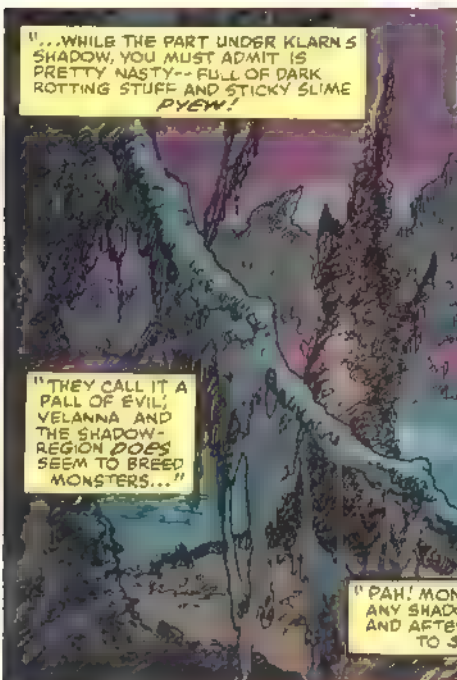
"BUT SO WHAT IF KLARN NOW CASTS
A SILLY SHADOW RING ON THE GROUND?
WHO CARES?-- EXCEPT CRABBY DWARFS"



"YOU CAN'T REALLY BLAME THEM,
VELANNA. AFTER ALL, THE SUNNY
PARTS OF WEIRDWORLD ARE
BEAUTIFUL-- ALL GREEN AND
FRESH AND GROWY-SMELLING..."



"...WHILE THE PART UNDER KLARN'S
SHADOW, YOU MUST ADMIT IS
PRETTY NASTY-- FULL OF DARK
ROTTING STUFF AND STICKY SLIME
PYEW!"



"THEY CALL IT A
PALL OF EVIL,
VELANNA. AND
THE SHADOW-
REGION *DOES*
SEEM TO BREED
MONSTERS..."

"PAH! MONSTERS BREED ON THEIR OWN AND SEEK THE SHADOWS,
ANY SHADOWS THEY CAN FIND! *WE'RE* NOT TO BLAME TYNDALL--
AND AFTER WE HELPED DEFEAT DARKLENS, I THOUGHT THEY'D BEGIN
TO *SEE* THAT; I THOUGHT THINGS MIGHT *CHANGE!*"

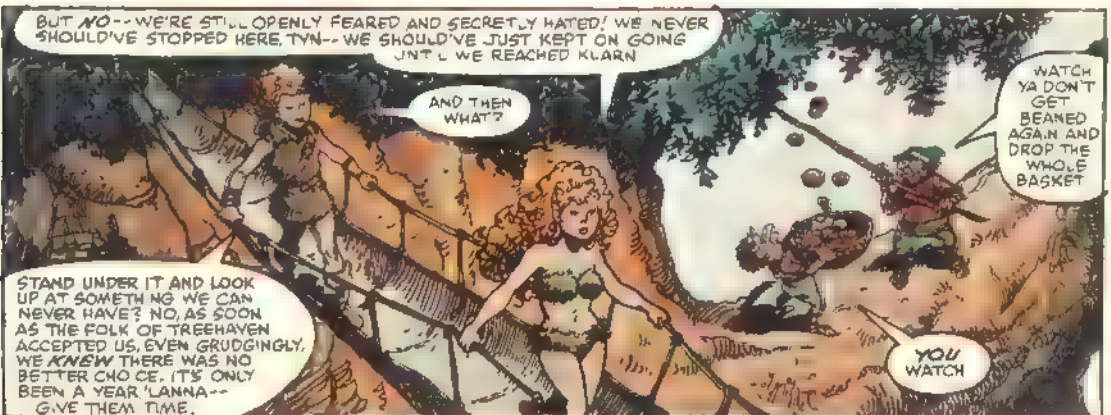
BUT *NO*--WE'RE STILL OPENLY FEARED AND SECRETLY HATED! WE NEVER
SHOULD'VE STOPPED HERE, TYN-- WE SHOULD'VE JUST KEPT ON GOING
UNTIL WE REACHED KLARN

AND THEN
WHAT?

WATCH
YA DON'T
GET
BEANED
AGAIN AND
DROP THE
WHOLE
BASKET

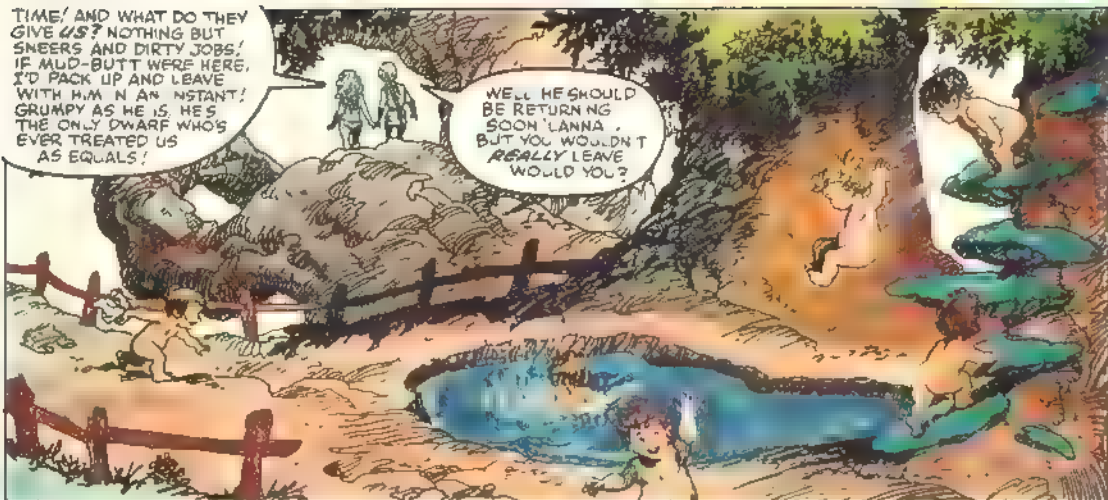
STAND UNDER IT AND LOOK
UP AT SOMETHING WE CAN
NEVER HAVE? NO, AS SOON
AS THE FOLK OF TREEHAVEN
ACCEPTED US, EVEN GRUDGINGLY,
WE *KNEW* THERE WAS NO
BETTER CHOICE. IT'S ONLY
BEEN A YEAR 'LANNA--
GIVE THEM TIME.

YOU
WATCH



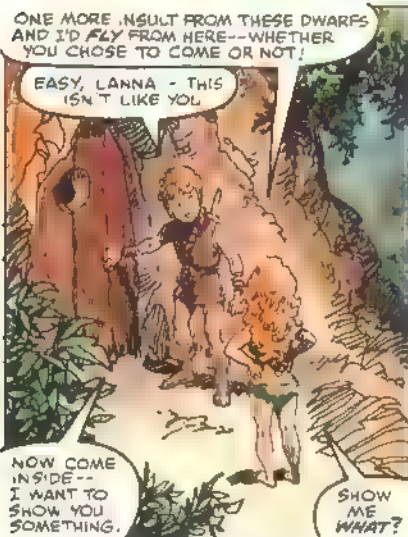
TIME! AND WHAT DO THEY GIVE US? NOTHING BUT SNEERS AND DIRTY JOBS! IF MUD-BUTT WERE HERE, I'D PACK UP AND LEAVE WITH HIM IN AN INSTANT! GRUMPY AS HE IS, HE'S THE ONLY DWARF WHO'S EVER TREATED US AS EQUALS!

WELL HE SHOULD BE RETURNING SOON 'LANNA. BUT YOU WOULDN'T REALLY LEAVE WOULD YOU?



ONE MORE INSULT FROM THESE DWARFS AND I'D FLY FROM HERE--WHETHER YOU CHOSE TO COME OR NOT!

EASY, LANNA - THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU

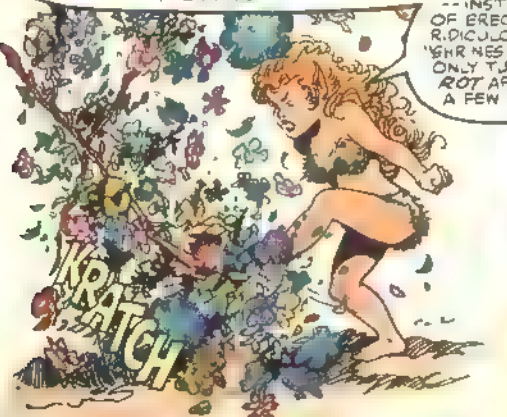


NOW COME INSIDE-- I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING.

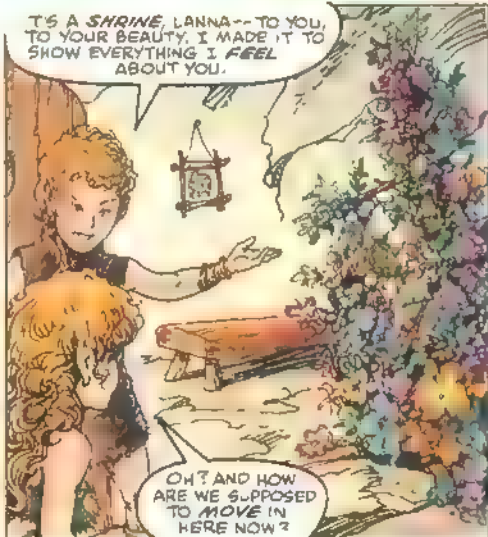
SHOW ME WHAT?

IF YOU FEEL SO MUCH LOVE FOR ME I'D THINK YOU'D SHOW SOME CONSIDERATION AND DO SOMETHING PRACTICAL FOR A CHANGE -

--INSTEAD OF ERECTING RIDICULOUS 'SHRINES' THAT'LL ONLY TURN TO ROT AFTER A FEW DAYS



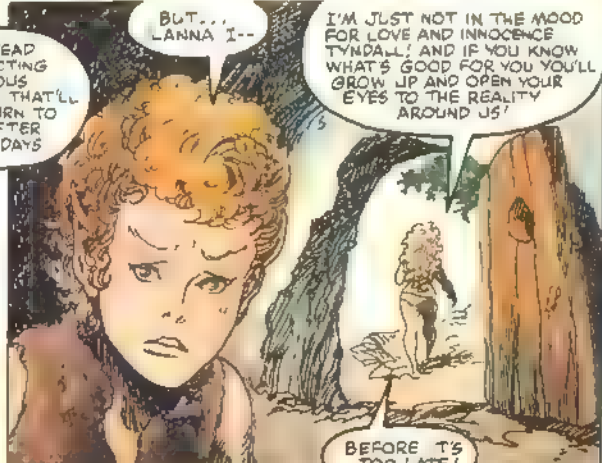
IT'S A SHRINE, LANNA-- TO YOU, TO YOUR BEAUTY. I MADE IT TO SHOW EVERYTHING I FEEL ABOUT YOU.



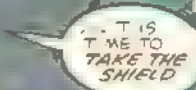
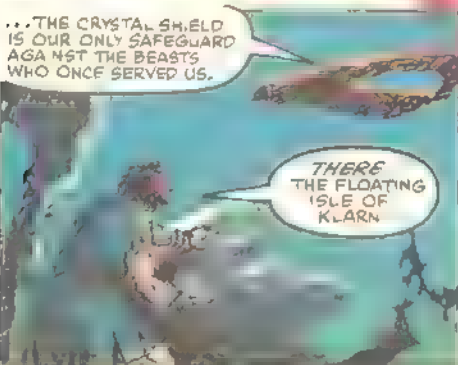
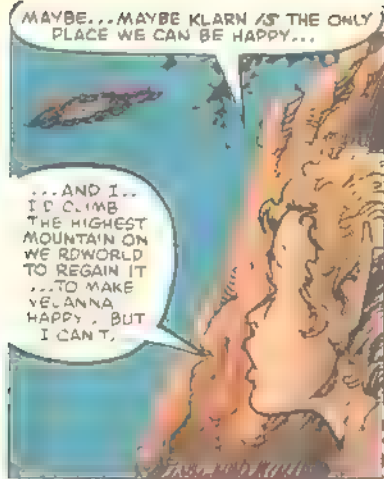
OH? AND HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO MOVE IN HERE NOW?

BUT... LANNA I--

I'M JUST NOT IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE AND INNOCENCE TYNDALL! AND IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU YOU'LL GROW UP AND OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE REALITY AROUND US!

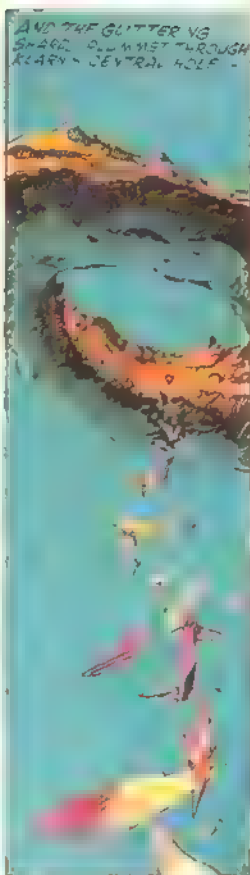


BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!





LOOK!
THE CRYSTAL
SHIELD! IT'S
SHATTERING!!



AND THE GLITTERING
SHARD OF LIGHT THROUGH
KLARN - CENTRAL HOLE -



-- STRAIGHT INTO
MURKANDOR'S
WAITING CART

LORD
MAJSTER
WAS RIGHT--
THE DARK
GODS HAVE
GRANTED
US NEW
POWER

HYAH!
HOME
MONSTER!

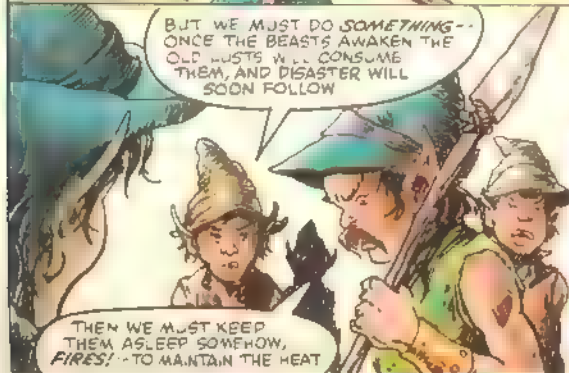
GRUMPH!



LOOK! ALREADY THE DRAGONS STIR
AND GROW RESTIVE WITH THE
ABSENCE OF THE SLEEP
CRYSTAL & HEAT

IF ONLY THERE WAS ONE
AMONG US WHO STILL
HELD THE THREADS OF
THE ANCIENT POWER.

IMPOSSIBLE-- WE
ARE THE LAST ELVES
OF KLARN AND THERE
IS NO SUCH DRAGON-
MASTER AMONG US



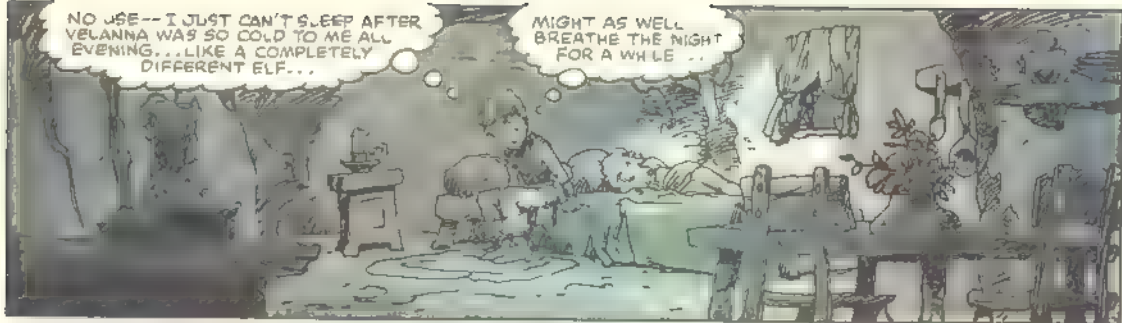
BUT WE MUST DO SOMETHING--
ONCE THE BEASTS AWAKEN THE
OLD WASTES WILL CONSUME
THEM, AND DISASTER WILL
SOON FOLLOW

THEN WE MUST KEEP
THEM ASLEEP SOMEHOW,
FIRES! --TO MAINTAIN THE HEAT

BUT D FRES
AROUND
THEM-- IT'S
OUR ONLY
CHANCE



YES...BUT WHO DID THIS?
WHY WAS THE CRYSTAL
STOLEN? AND WHY DO I
FEAR THE ANSWER WITH
ALL MY SOUL...?



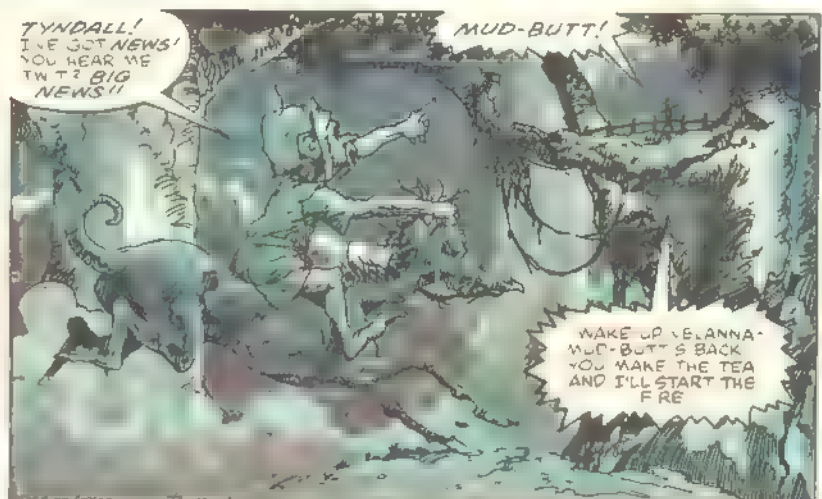
NO USE-- I JUST CAN'T SLEEP AFTER VELANNA WAS SO COLD TO ME ALL EVENING... LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ELF...

MIGHT AS WELL BREATHE THE NIGHT FOR A WHILE...



I'M LOSING HER - I KNOW IT! THE CHANGE IN HER IS--

HEY, TWIT! WAKE UP!



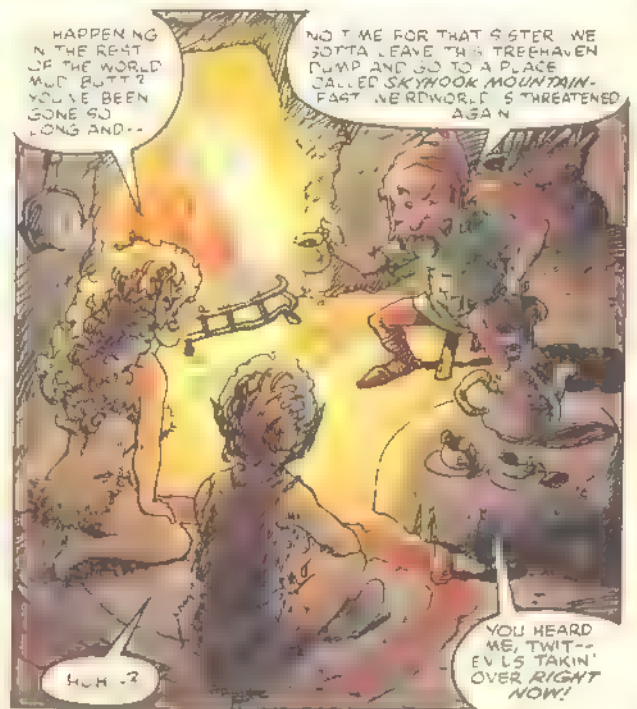
TYNDALL! I'VE GOT NEWS! YOU HEAR ME TWIT? BIG NEWS!!

MUD-BUTT!

WAKE UP VELANNA! MUD-BUTT'S BACK! YOU MAKE THE TEA AND I'LL START THE FIRE



MORE KINDLING! WE'VE GOT TO MAKE THE FIRES HOTTER BEFORE THEY WAKE UP! AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE SMOKE-- THEY BREATHE THE STUFF!



HAPPENING IN THE REST OF THE WORLD MUD-BUTT? YOU'VE BEEN GONE SO LONG AND--

NO TIME FOR THAT SISTER WE GOTTA LEAVE THIS TREEHAVEN BEHIND AND GO TO A PLACE CALLED SKYHOOK MOUNTAIN. FAST! NERDWORK'S THREATENED AGAIN

HUH?

YOU HEARD ME, TWIT-- EVIL'S TAKIN' OVER RIGHT NOW!

THINGS LIKE THAT ARE HAPPENIN ALL OVER--
AND THE WIZARD OF SKYHOOK MOUNTAIN IS THE
ONLY ONE WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO STOP IT!
DONT YA SEE? WE GOTTA GO GET
HIS HELP!



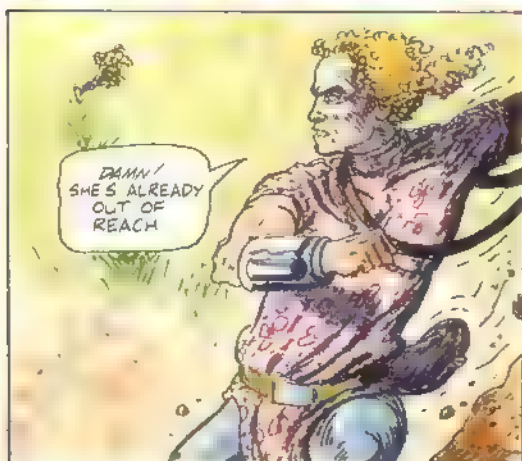
MAYBE YOU DO
TYNDALL BUT IT'S A
HOME BUILT ON CHILD SH
HOPE, STAY IF YOU WISH--
PERHAPS IT'S BETTER
THIS WAY



YES LORD MAJ. STER--
WITH THE KLARN SLEEP
CRYSTA



GOOD. NO
DOUBT THE DRAGONS
WILL NOW RISE TO
WORK SOME PETTY
MISCHIEF - ALSO
GOOD.



HMM
DOES
REGISTER
AS A
HUMAN
SHAPE

FOURTEEN MINUTES

HEH HEH HEH

I CAN JUST REACH
HIM FAST ENOUGH

CHHH
SH T!

IT'S A... DECOY!

A JETPACK?! HOW
THE HELL DID SHE
GET A JETPACK?

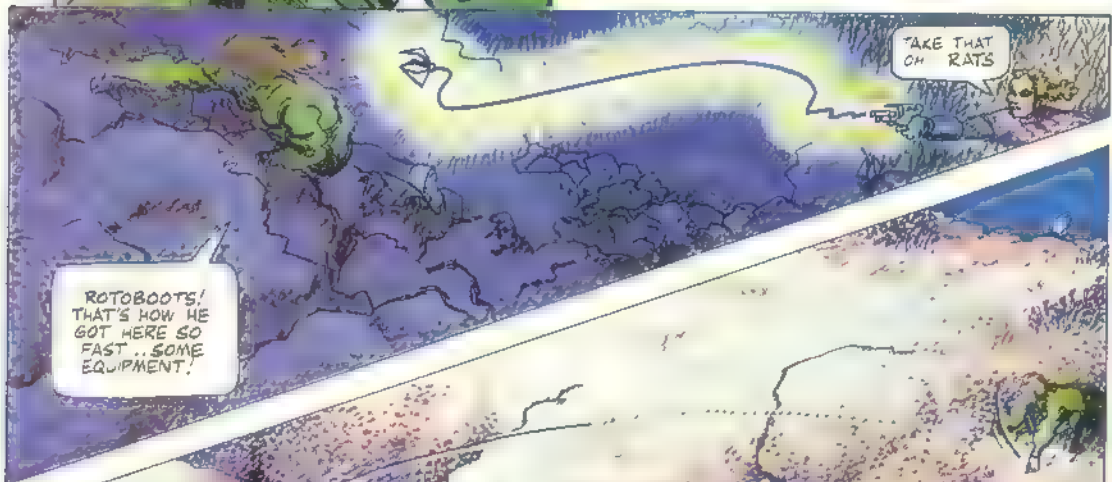


A DECOY!
THAT SNEAKY
ASSHOLE. TOO
BAD I COULD
ONLY AFFORD
ONE PACK
CHARGE..



HERE?!!
ALREADY?

16X!



TAKE THAT
OH RATS

ROTOBOOTS!
THAT'S HOW HE
GOT HERE SO
FAST.. SOME
EQUIPMENT!

THE OLD VET
BEACON TRUCK--
HE'LL NEVER GUESS
I WOULD DECOY
HIM... I HOPE

EN-MINUTE-STEN-MINUT

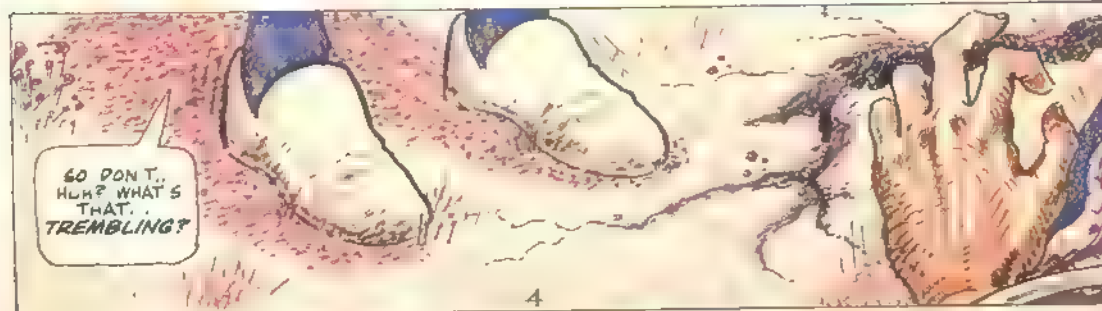


A FLASH... COULD THAT BE A
DECOY... FOR ME? HAW... THAT
SNOTTY KNOW-IT-ALL WOULD
NEVER DUPLICATE ONE OF MY
PLOYS THE FLASH-MOVING



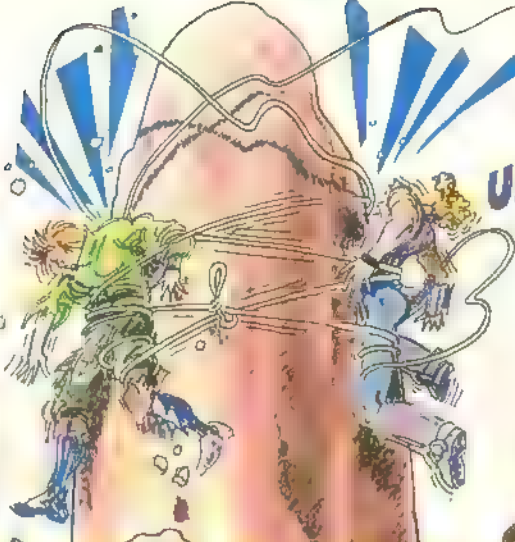
GOTCHA!

GHT M...TES EIGHT M...



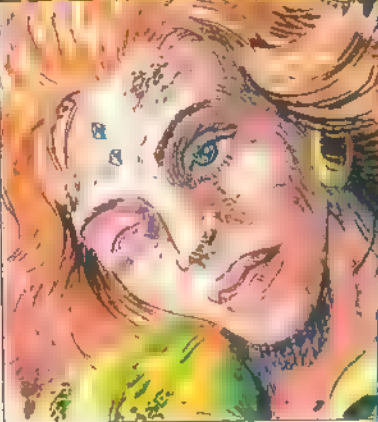
AAAAAAAAA!





UNNHH!

IX MINUTES SIX MINUT



MY GOD,
THE BOLO
SAVED
OUR
LIVES



ONLY FOR THE
MOMENT TH'S
ROCK'S SHEER-
SDED WE'VE
GOT TO RAPPL
DOWN - BRACE
AGANST EACH
OTHER OR
WE'LL LOSE
HOLD AND
FALL. UHH

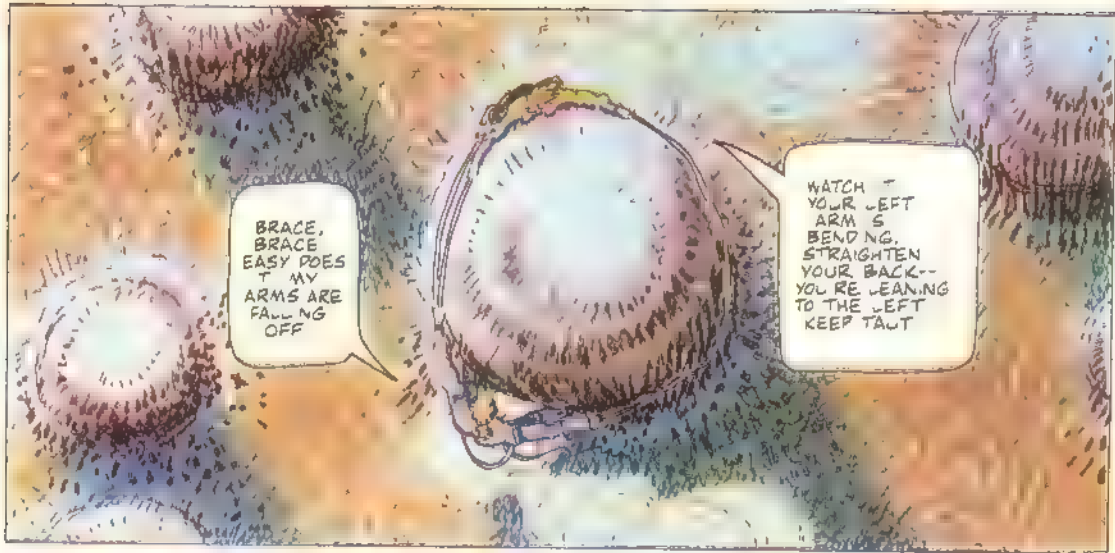


OH
MY BACK

EASY
OVER

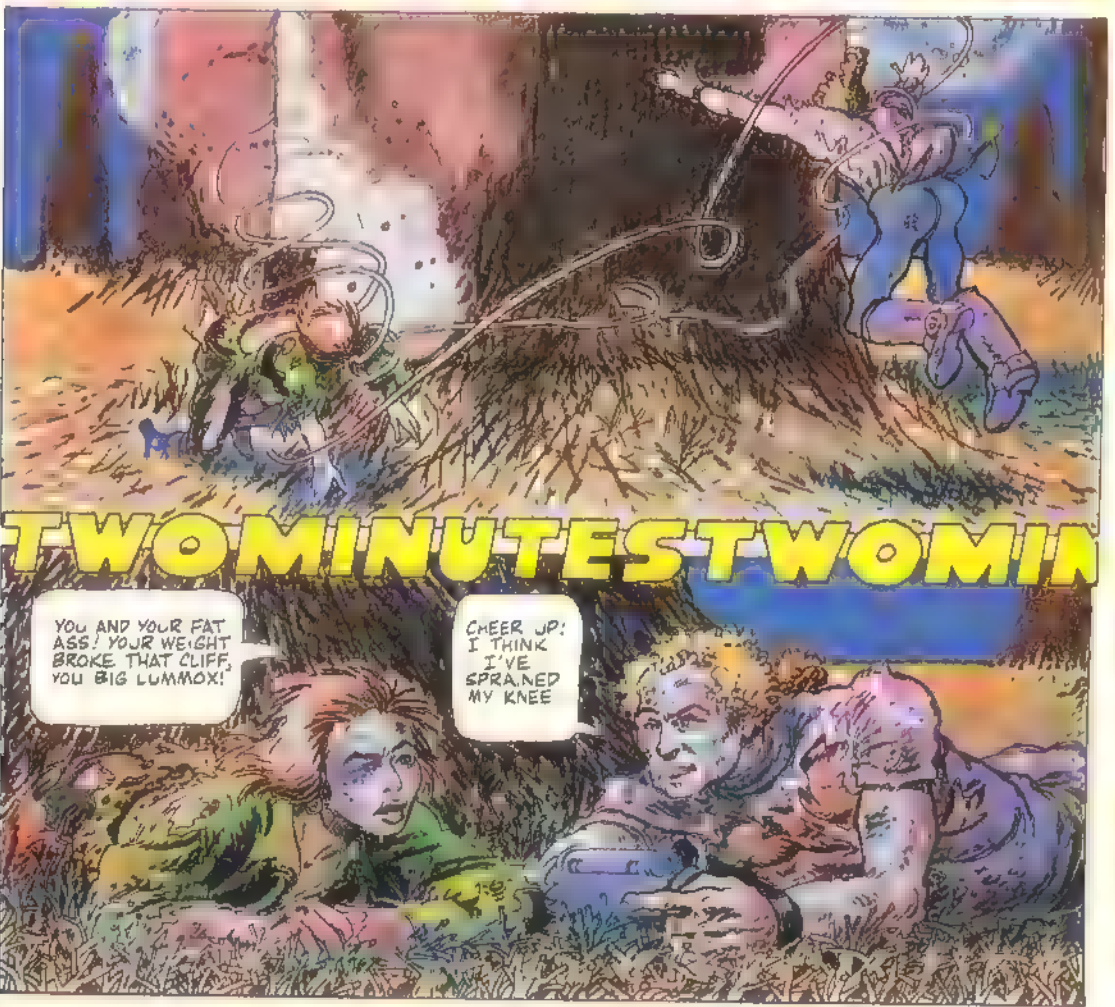


THAT'S T
A LITTLE
SLOWER NOW



BRACE,
BRACE
EASY DOES
T MY
ARMS ARE
FALLING
OFF

WATCH
T
YOUR LEFT
ARM'S
BENDING.
STRAIGHTEN
YOUR BACK--
YOU'RE LEANING
TO THE LEFT
KEEP TIGHT



TWO MINUTE TWO WOMEN

YOU AND YOUR FAT
ASS! YOUR WEIGHT
BROKE THAT CLIFF,
YOU BIG LUMMOX!

CHEER UP!
I THINK
I'VE
SPRAINED
MY KNEE



YOU LUMBERING
FOOL-- YOU
SCARED THE HELL
OUT OF ME,
SHOWING UP ON
THOSE ROTOBOOTS
YOU DAREDEVIL!

THOSE ROTOBOOTS
ARE HELL TO
MANEUVER... I
ALMOST KILLED
MYSELF TRYING
TO SPEED UP
AND CATCH YOU.
OH! WATCH
OUT FOR MY
KNEE

METIMETIMETIMETIM

NEXT!

AND HOW DID YOU
EVER GET A JETPACK?
THEY COST A FORTUNE!

HAH!
REMEMBER
MY PAL, ALICE?

START

**MARRIAGE
COUNSEL
ARENA**

ISOLATION & ILLUSION

The IDEAL -

1981

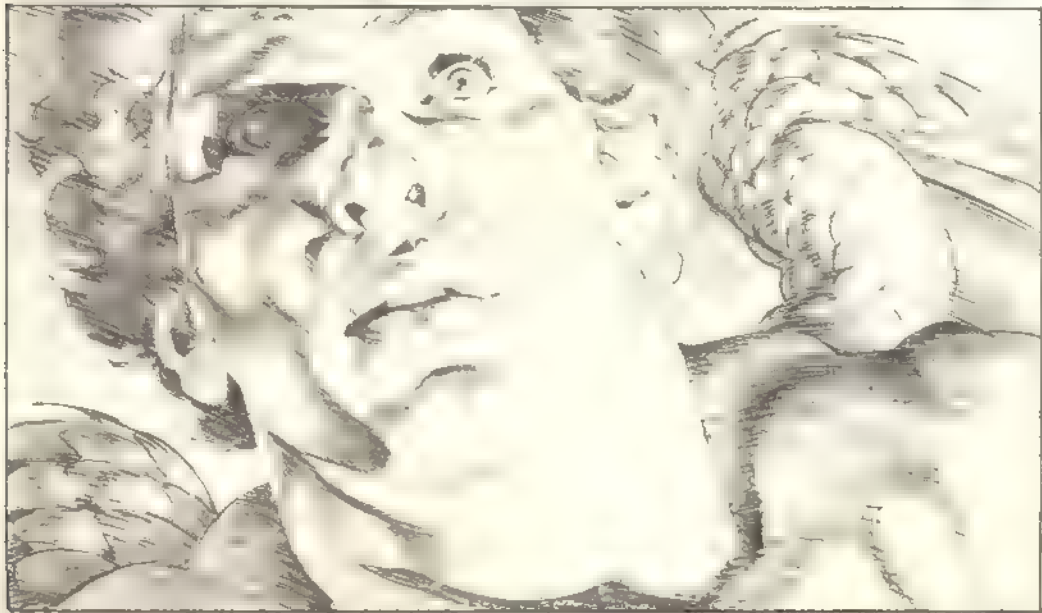
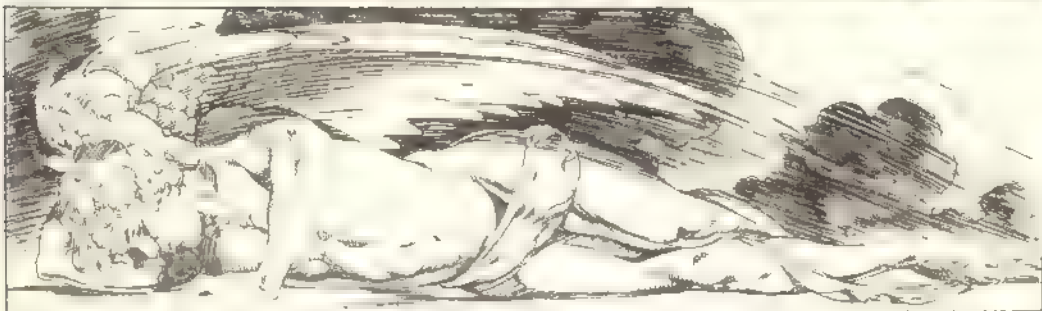


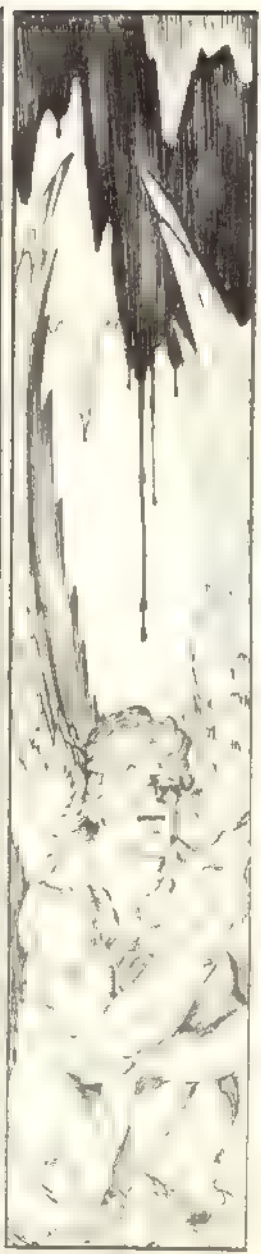
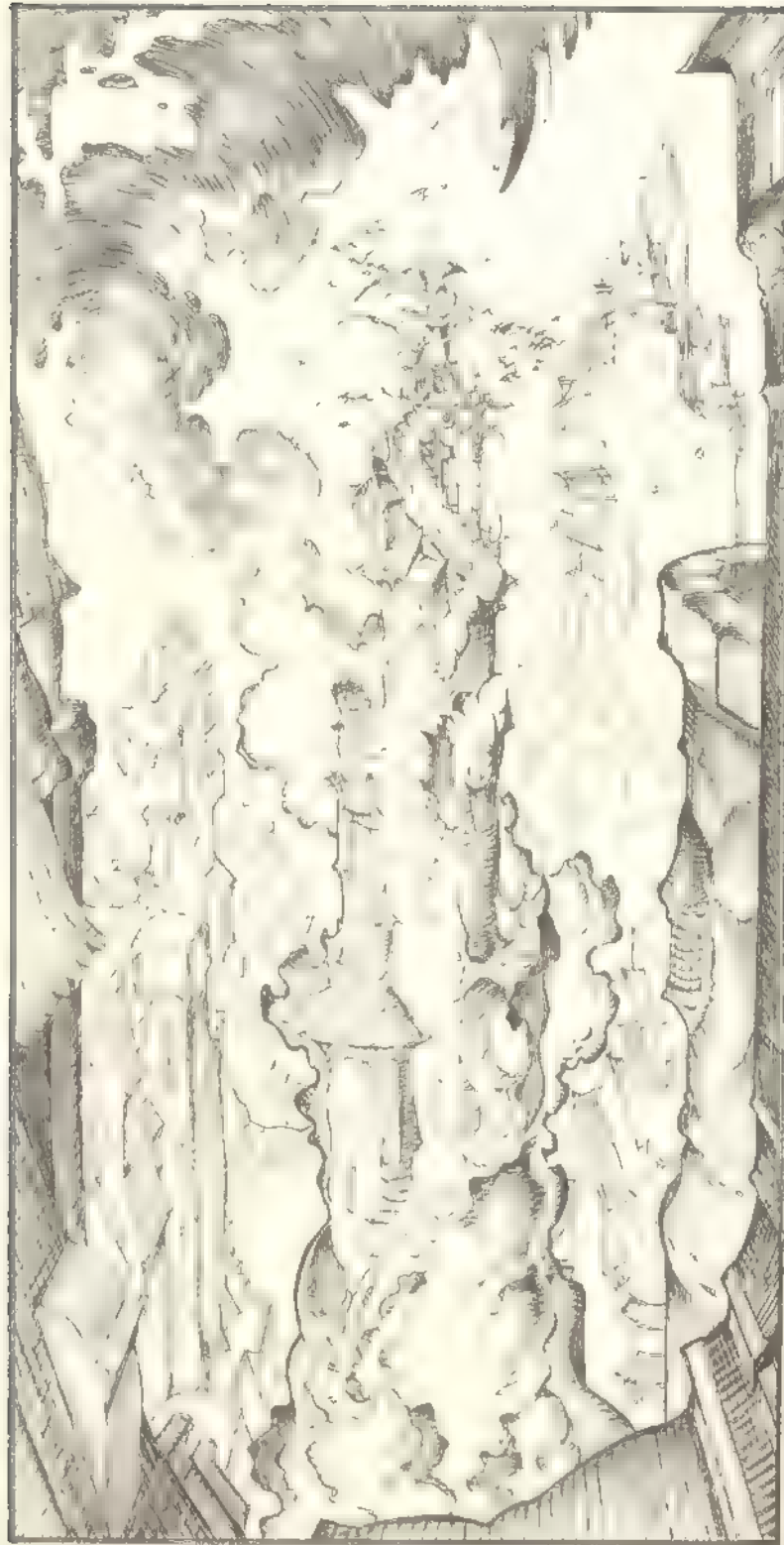
...the world is not what it seems to be...

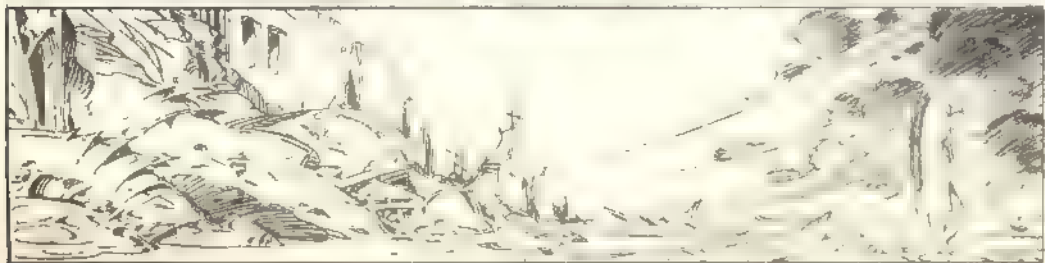
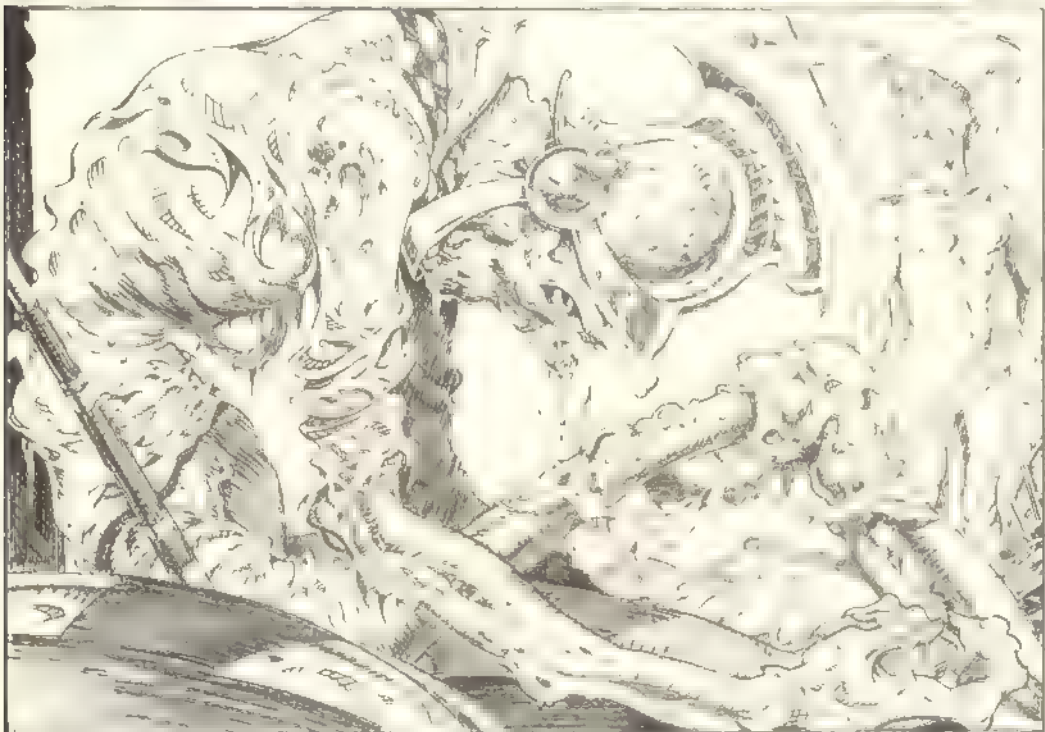
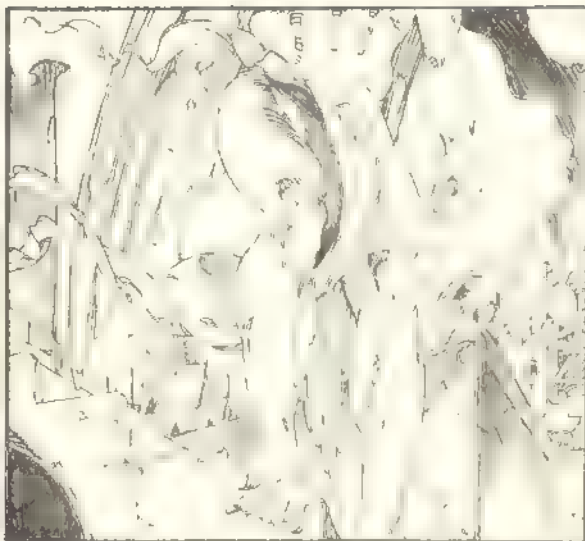
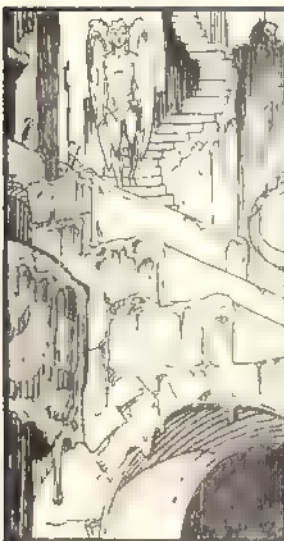
THE IDEAL -

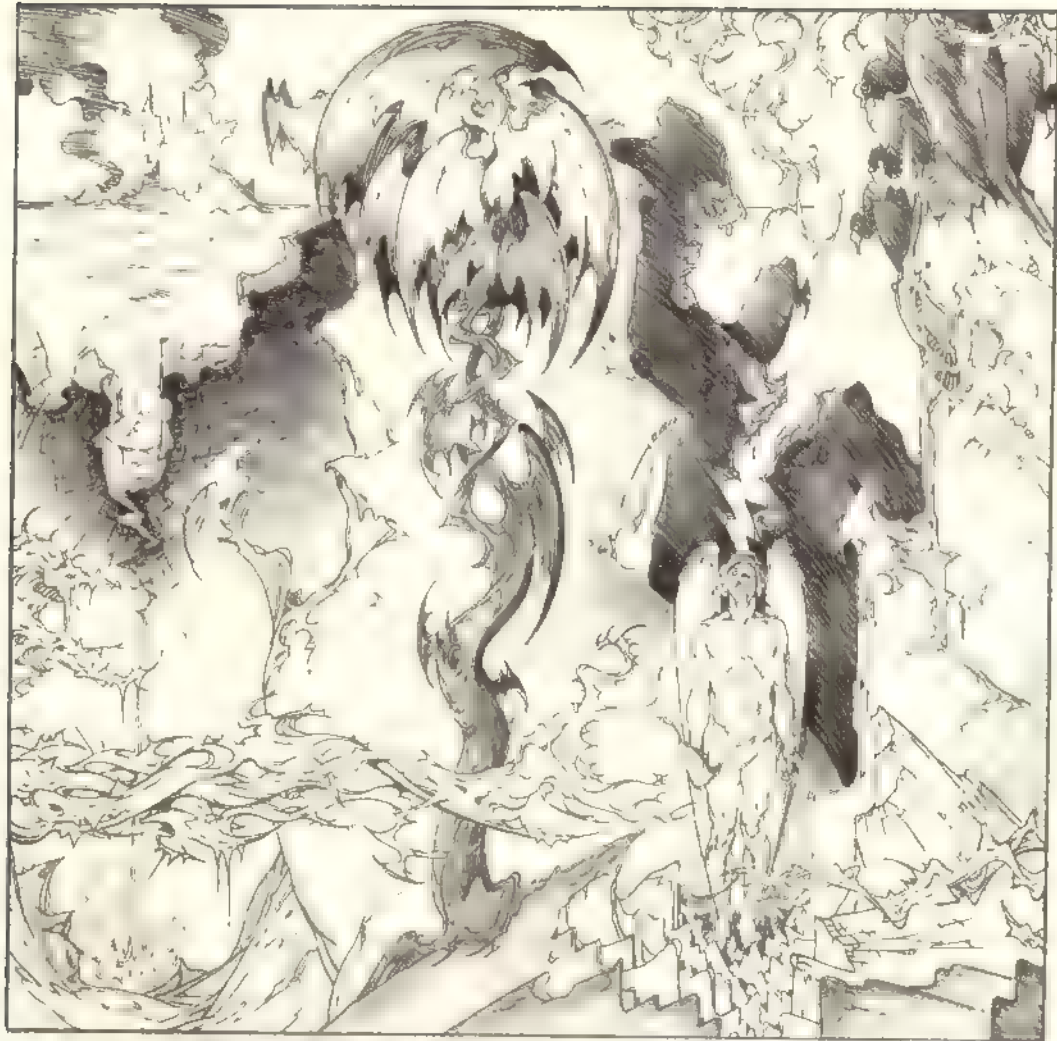
by P. Craig Russell

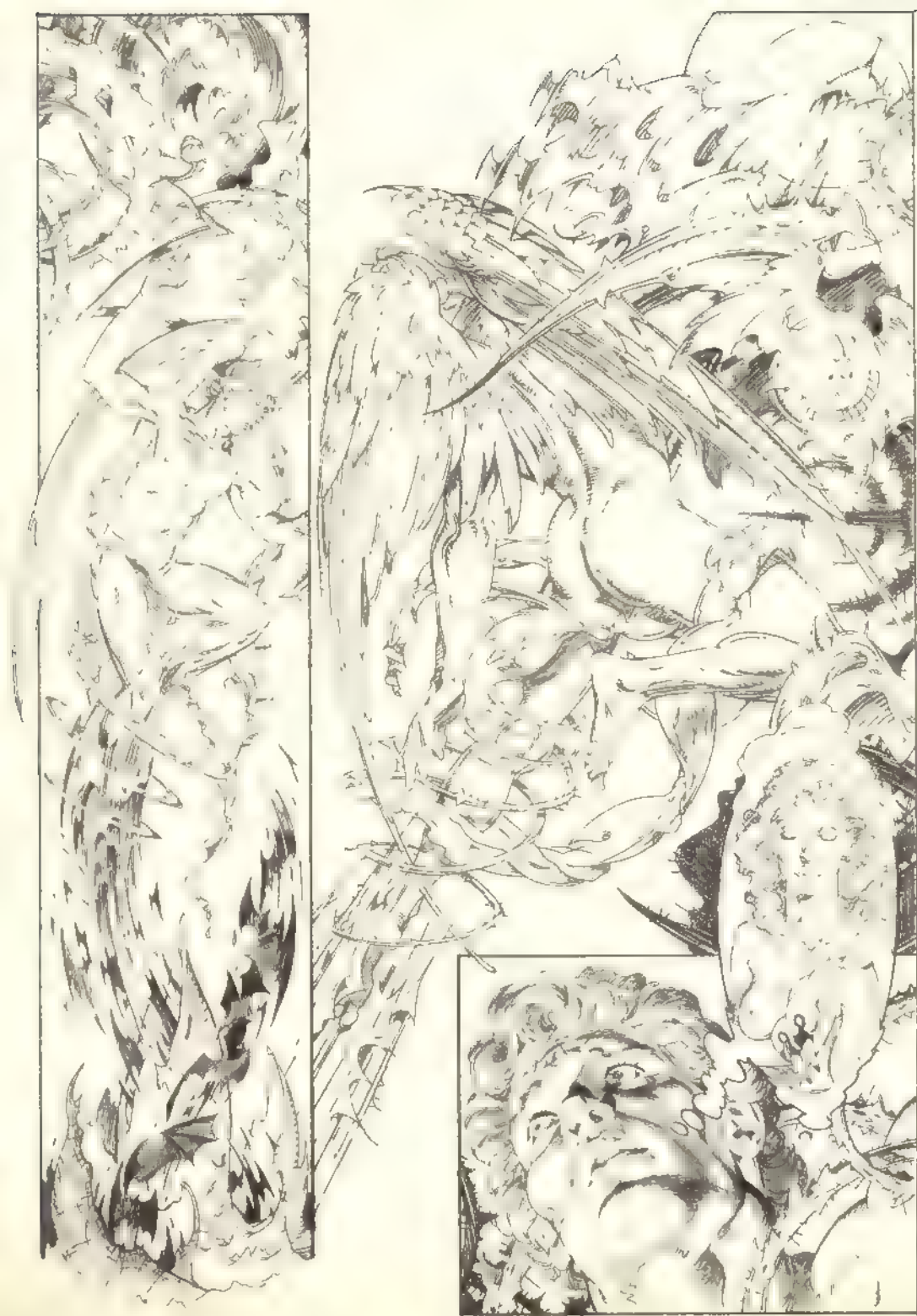
OPUS

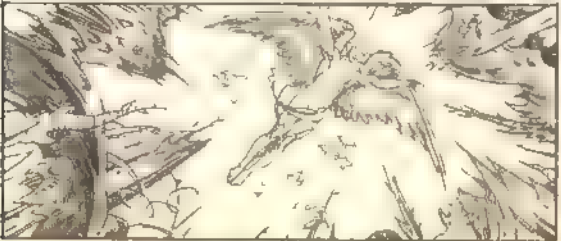
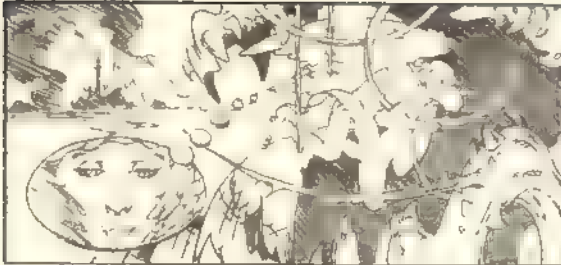


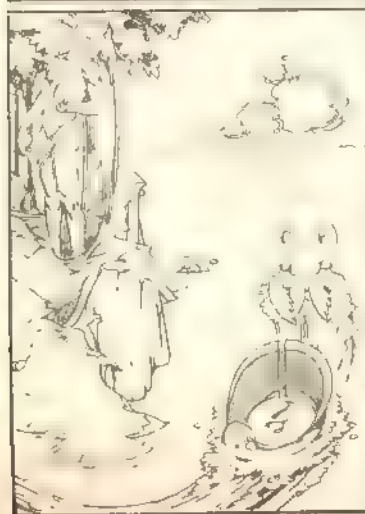


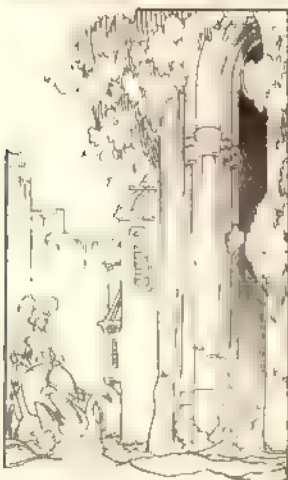
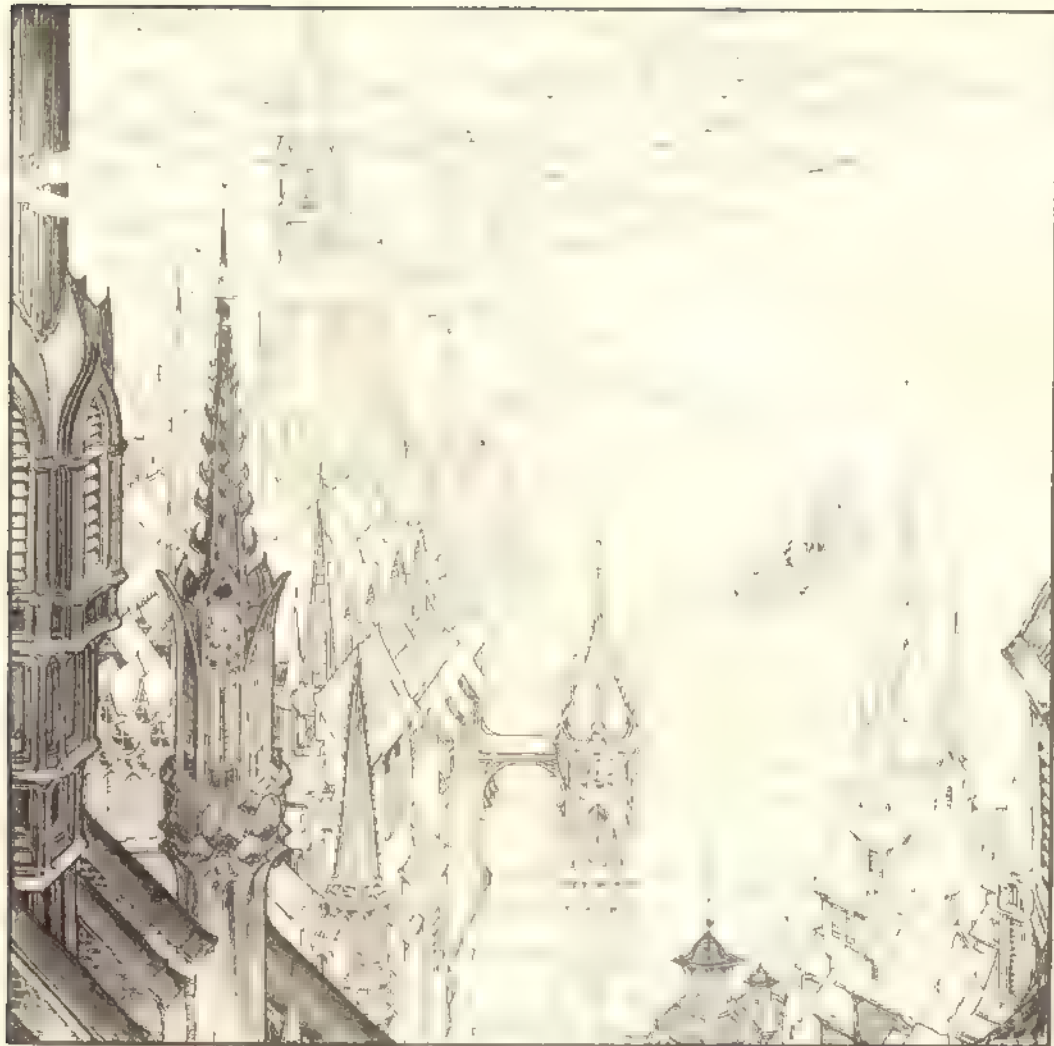


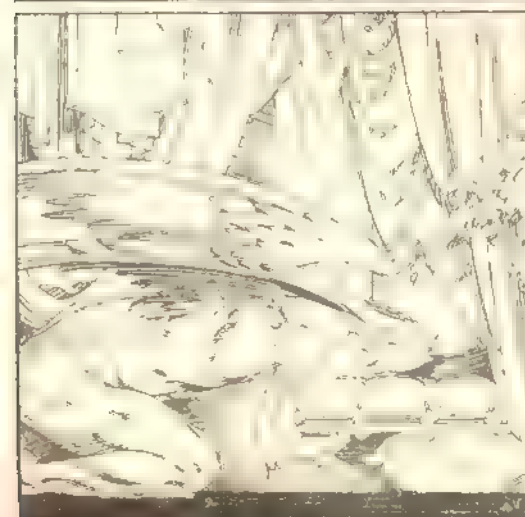




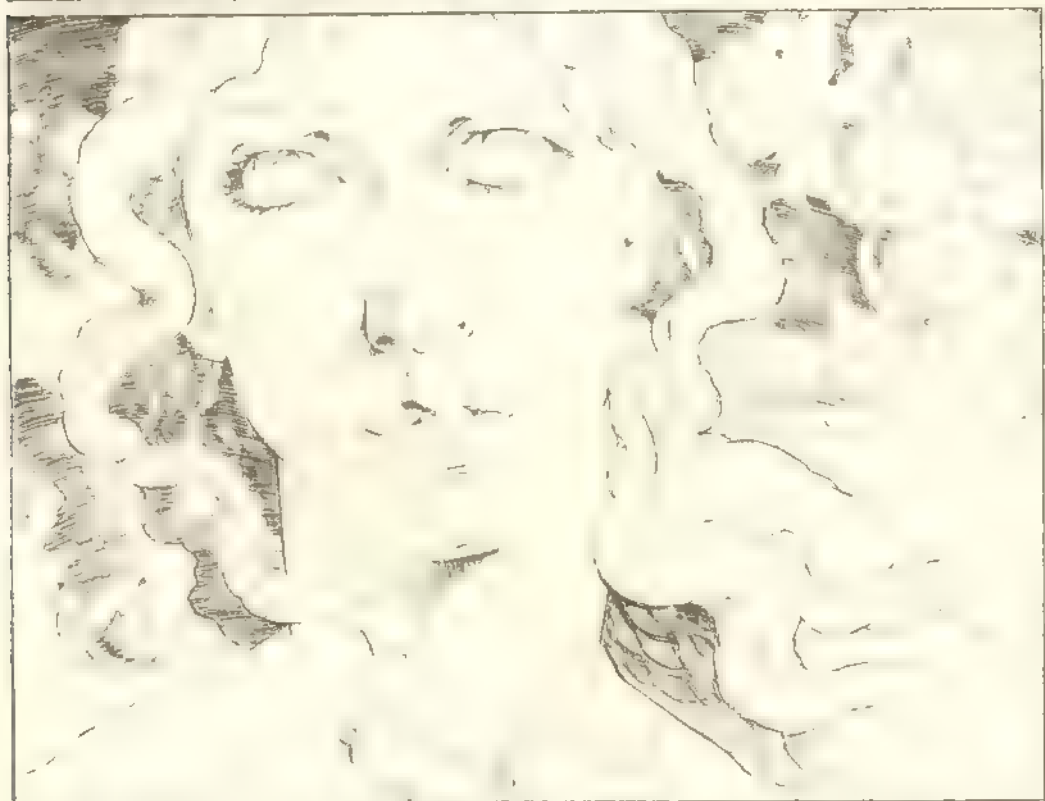


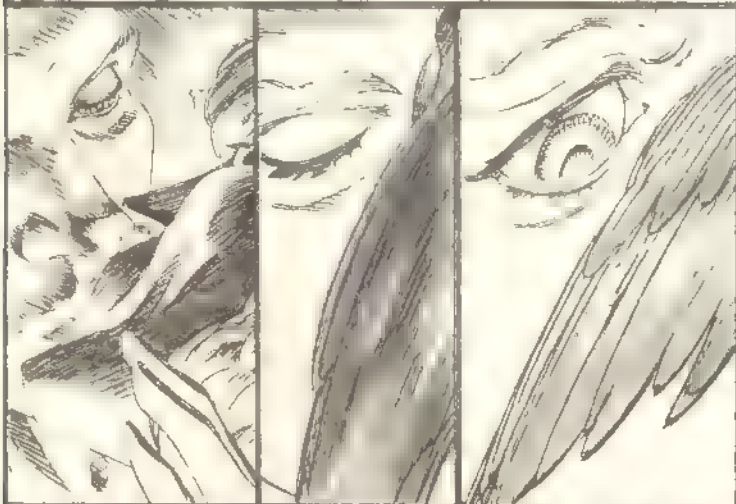


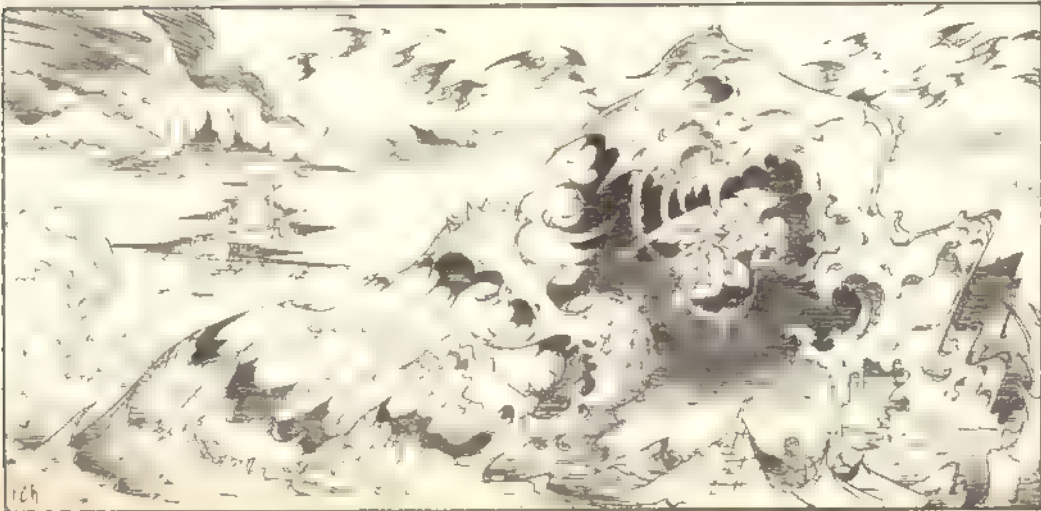












BUT THE *REAL* OBJECTIVE IS TO REASSEMBLE THE SLEEP CRYSTAL FOR A *NEW* PURPOSE

...THE
REVERSE
OF ITS
ORIGINAL
PURPOSE

YOU SEE ONCE MY NEW
POWERS HAVE CLOAKED IT
IN DARKNESS, IT WILL
CARRY ME TO THE LAND
OF THE DEAD--

--WHERE I
SHALL USE IT TO
AWAKEN THE
DEN ZENS SLEEP-
ING THERE N

IT'S NO USE
THE BEASTS HAVE
AWAKENED AND THEY
THINK THE FUKES ARE
A *THREAT!*

THEY BELIEVE WE'RE
ATTACKING THEM! *RUN!!*

RED SORYLL IS RISING TO
THE ROOF-- LEADING THEM
OUT THROUGH THE OPEN
CASEMENT WHERE THE
CRYSTAL SHIELD ONCE
CONTAINED THEM
IN SLEEP!

WE'VE FAILED OUR
CHARGE! THEY ARE
FREE-- AND THE
LAND BELOW WILL
NOW SUFFER THEIR
RELEASE



A large red dragon with its wings spread, breathing a stream of fire from its mouth. The fire is intense, with bright yellow and orange flames. The dragon is positioned in the upper center of the frame. The background is a dark, dense forest with green foliage. The overall scene is dramatic and action-packed.

TO ITS DWARF RESIDENTS, TREEHAVEN IS AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING, SELF-SUFFICIENT HOME, PROVIDING FOOD, FUEL, SHELTER, CLOTHING, AND THE RAW MATERIAL FOR TOOLS.

THE STately SPIRIT EMBODIED IN THE LIVING WOOD EVEN OFFERS A BASIS FOR RELIGION, AND MANY OF THE DWELLERS HAVE NEVER FELT A NEED TO LEAVE THE VERDANT SHELTER OF ITS BOUGHS.

TREEHAVEN, THEN, IS AN ENTIRE WORLD.

BUT NOW, LED BY FIERCE RED SORYLL, THE KLARN DRAGONS BEGIN TO SCORCH THIS PLACE, RAVAGING IT FROM THE TOP DOWN, SEEKING TO SEAR THE VERY ROOTS OF A WORLD.

AND AS THE HORROR RAINS DOWN, THERE IS BUT ONE AT ARBOR'S HEART WHO IS IMMUNE TO THE PANDEMONIUM, WHO REMAINS PLACID AND CENTERED DESPITE HIMSELF...

AN INNOCENT ELF NAMED TYNDALL.

I TOLD YA THINGS LIKE THIS WERE HAPPENIN' ALL OVER! GOOD THING I'VE STILL GOT THIS POWER-ROD I SWIPEO FROM LORD RAVEN...

C'MON--NOW WE GOTTA SAVE YOUR TWIT BOY-FRIEND!

ZOOOSH

FIRST JUST LEMME CONVINCE THESE FLYIN' FREAKS TO BELCH THEIR FIRES ELSEWHERE!

BUT AS THE DESTRUCTIVE BEAM FROM MUD-BUTT'S POWER-ROD SLASHES A DRAGON FROM THE SKY--

NOOO!!

--TYNDALL'S TRANCE IS SHATTERED.

HE RISES, LIFTING HIS ARMS, AND CROONS TO THE HEAVENS...

ILLIANOR! HEPHESTIUS ILLIANOR!

STILL THE DRAGONS SWOOP THROUGH THEIR TRACERS OF FLAME, BUT TYNDALL IS A FIRM ROCK IN THE SEA OF CHAOS...

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO HIM? WHAT'S HE SAYING--OR SINGING--OR WHATEVER HE'S DOING?

I...DON'T KNOW...BUT IT SOUNDED FAMILIAR SOMEHOW...ILLIANOR, I THINK...A NAME...

AND, ABRUPTLY, THE DRAGONS HALT THEIR ATTACK. GENTLY WAFTING ON THE FLAME-HEAT, RED SORYLL HOVERS BEFORE TYNDALL...

AND, AS IF BIDDEN BY MAGIC, RED SORYLL WHEELS OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF WEIRDWORLD'S THIRD MOON. HIS FELLOW BEASTS FOLLOW IN SILENCE...

SOMETHING PASSES BETWEEN THEIR EYES.

...UNTIL THERE IS ONLY THE WHINE OF FIRE AND THE ECHO OF TYNDALL'S STRANGE SONG.

IT IS OVER... BUT TREEHAVEN WILL BURN THROUGH THE NIGHT.

MORNING:

TREEHAVEN SCORCHED
TO CINDERS-- AND
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, YA DAMNED,
EERIE ELF!

BUT... BUT I STOPPED THE ATTACK! I DON'T
REALLY KNOW HOW... BUT I SEEMED TO
REMEMBER SOME SONG... ANCIENT SOUNDS
FROM A PAST I CAN'T QUITE RECALL... AND
I SANG IT... AND THE DRAGONS DEPARTED!

A LIKELY STORY!
ELVES HAVE ALWAYS
SPELLED EVIL--
THEY'RE BORN
FROM IT!

WE NEVER SHOULD
HAVE ALLOWED YOU
AND YOUR TART-GIRL
TO STAY HERE!

NOW GO--
NEVER TO
RETURN!

AGAIN... THEY'RE
DOING IT AGAIN...

POOR TYNDALL...
POOR NAIVE,
HOPELESSLY
TRUSTING
TYNDALL...

YEAH, TWIT-- LOOKS LIKE
YOU'LL BE VENTURING
WITH US TO SKYHOOK
MOUNTAIN AFTER ALL,
I JUST HOPE WE GET
THERE...

"...IN TIME!"

THE
CRYSTAL
SHIELD
MAKES AN
EXCELLENT
SAIL, AS
THE DEMON
VOICES
PROMISED.

AT THIS SPEED I SHALL REACH
AND CROSS THE SEA TO THE LAND
OF THE DEAD IN MERE DAYS...

YOUR LAST MOVE, MY OPPONENT,
WAS A GAMBIT OF SHEER,
DOOMED HOPE.

SO IT
WOULD
SEEM...

AND IN
MY DARK
STRATAGEM,
ANOTHER PIECE
FALLS TO OUR
SIDE...

NEXT: THE WIZARD OF SKYHOOK MOUNTAIN